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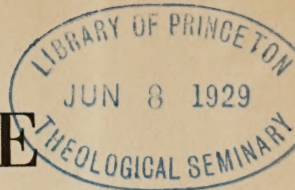








# IMMORTAL VERSE



EDITED BY

E. S. BUCHANAN

*and*

PHILIP HANSON HISS

*And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian Aires,  
Married to Immortal Verse.*

MILTON

*Blessings be with them and eternal praise  
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,—  
The poets who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays.*

WORDSWORTH

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1929



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PHILIP HANSON HISS

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*AD*  
*MATRES NOSTRAS*  
*DILECTISSIMAS*  
*VNAM FELICITER SVPERSTITEM*  
*ALTERAM IN CELVM TRANSGRESSAM*  
*D. D.*  
*MENTIBVS DEVOTISSIMIS*  
*EDITORES*





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## PREFACE.

The best poetry not only preserves man's spirit from "eating cares" but at the same time instructs and delights. It is both curative and restorative.

Milton conceived of music and poetry as liberators of the soul from chains. It could even bring to life the dead.

"Such strains as would have quite set free  
His half-regained Eurydice—"

From these high uses poetry has now been degraded to minister to personal vanity. The salt has lost its savour, and there is a general contempt for the modern article, served to us in *vers libres*. Wordsworth invokes blessings on the poets who have made us heirs of truth and delight "by heavenly lays," and he adds that the poetry he finds most delightful is that of Shakespeare and Spenser.

Now Shakespeare is too long for an age as busy as ours to take in without some previous preparation, and the same is true of Spenser. There must be an approach to the long poems by a previous appreciation of the shorter and more easily comprehended compositions.

The present collection is intended to be a kind of *Gradus ad Parnassum*, and when it has been mastered, the reader will be ready to contend with *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost*.

We do not altogether agree with Poe's dictum that there is no such thing as a long poem. Long poems, like long sermons, are at present in ill favor; but are not likely to be forever dispensed with. At the same time such poems as, *Rose Aylmer* and *Crossing the Bar* reach



thousands who would not be reached by Wordsworth's *Excursion* or Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

There is a virtue in putting much thought or feeling into a short compass in spite of Milton's praise of "linked sweetness long drawn out." The busy world of today has little leisure compared with that of the Puritans and Elizabethans. The diversions are absorbing and multitudinous: yet poetry has its use as an antidote to pre-occupation with the things that can be purchased. For it deals with the higher moods of the human spirit, is a powerful medicine against ennui and can give pleasure that does not soon wear out.

The selectors have also had in view sanity as well as classical form and perfection. Only an author's best poems and those most lasting in their appeal have been chosen. In a collection of this size it would be impossible to include many poems that are well loved but do not in content and musical quality measure up to the high standard that we have sought to establish throughout. The poems included are those in which both of us have found most delight. For the production is a joint work, and individually preferred poems have in many instances been sacrificed to obtain a consensus. This consensus represents the old world and the new, the generation past and the generation present, and is therefore the more valuable, as making the collection more general in its appeal.

We have stressed certain poets for their essential qualities. Browning has been emphasised because of intellectual power and sane outlook on life. His philosophy and optimism are contained in five of the poems selected, which show life from early childhood to its continuance after death. These poems are *Pippa Passes*, *The Last Ride Together*, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, *Prospice* and *Epilogue to Asolando*. Tennyson has been stressed because of his remarkable lyric gift, and the sheer beauty of his versification. Longfellow has been included with Tennyson

as his American counterpart, for in his best poems there is the same high musical quality. Byron's immense vitality puts him in a class by himself. His love lyrics have been unjustly banned in England, and thus have not enjoyed the general appreciation that they deserve. Poe has a poetic quality of his own. He obtains his effects partly by a subtle use of repetition and partly by creating, when he chooses, an eerie atmosphere peculiar to himself. He revels in assonances and alliterations. There is also a lovable quality about the man. His passage through the world was rough and his exit tragic.

To appreciate to the full the musical part of poetry, one must understand the laws of versification. English verse is measured not by syllables but by voice-stresses,—

Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O sea;  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

There are three accented syllables in each line, and therefore three feet. A foot may be of one, two, or three syllables,—

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan,  
Blinding sweet by the river  
Piercing sweet, O great god Pan!  
The sun on the hill forgot to die,  
And the lilies revived and the dragon fly  
Came back to dream on the river.

There are four kinds of feet employed in English verse: viz., iambic (˘ˊ), anapaestic (˘˘ˊ), trochaic (ˊ˘), and dactylic (ˊ˘˘). Of these a line may contain two (dimeter), three (trimeter), four (tetrameter), five (pentameter), six (hexameter), or seven (heptameter).



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Verse is classified, first by the kind of foot used, and second by the number of feet employed in the sequent lines. Thus *Break, Break, Break* is iambic trimeter with one syllable over (hypercatalectic) in the third line. The lines quoted of Mrs. Browning are a combination of iambic tetrameter and trimeter, five Iambics being replaced by anapaests, which is legitimate in this meter, as is also the use of a trochee in the first foot. Iambic is the meter of general use in English poetry. All blank verse is Iambic, also all heroic verse. Wordsworth uses nothing else, confining himself strictly to the Iambic measures. Tennyson (with a few notable exceptions), such as *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, follows Wordsworth. Poe and Longfellow are also Iambic poets, while Browning varies Iambics with other meters. *The Lost Leader* is Dactylic Tetrameter; *Prospice* is Anapaestic Tetrameter; and *Home Thoughts from the Sea* is Trochaic Tetrameter.

This volume should commend itself to a wide circle of readers by its freedom from all poetry of an inferior grade. Of the poems here presented, we believe every one to be immortal and to offer to the reader truth and delight, balm and blessing. In contrast with the vast ephemeral productions of our day and generation, these poems form a galaxy of stars, as deathless as the constellations that shine with such constancy and lustre over our heads.

E. S. BUCHANAN,  
PHILIP HANSON HISS.

NEW YORK, N. Y.,  
November, 1928.

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## EDMUND SPENSER

(1552–1599)

Edmund Spenser was born and died in London. He has been called the poets' poet. His *Faerie Queene*, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, is a mine in which poets will always find inspiration. Other works of his are *The Shepherd's Calender* and *Amoretti*. The latter is a sonnet sequence, written to Elizabeth Boyle, whom he married in 1594. Famous among his contemporaries, his antiquated style is a bar to his acceptance today. Milton describes him as "the sage and serious Spenser, whom I dare to be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas."

### SWEET AND SOUR

Sweet is the rose, but grows upon a brier;  
Sweet is the juniper, but sharp his bough;  
Sweet is the eglantine, but pricketh near;  
Sweet is the fir-bloom, but his branches rough;  
Sweet is the cypress, but his rind is tough;  
Sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill;  
Sweet is the broom-flower, but yet sour enough;  
And sweet is moly, but his root is ill;  
So every sweet with sour is tempered still,  
That maketh it be coveted the more;  
For easy things that may be got at will,  
Most sorts of men do set but little store.  
Why then should I account of little pain,  
That endless pleasure shall unto me gain?



## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

(1554-1586)

Sir Philip Sidney was a Kentish man, a soldier, courtier, poet, and hero. His sonnets inspired those of Spenser and Shakespeare. They were written to Penelope Devereaux, a daughter of the first Earl of Essex. In 1583, at the age of thirty, he was knighted and married the fourteen-year-old daughter of the Queen's secretary. When he was but thirty-two, he was killed at the battle of Zutphen. His works include *Arcadia* a pastoral romance and an essay called *Defence of Poesy*.

### SONNET

Leave me, O love, which reachest but to dust,  
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things!  
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust: ✓  
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.  
Draw in thy beams and humble all thy might  
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be;  
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the Light  
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.  
O take fast hold! Let that Light be thy guide  
In this small course which birth draws out to death,  
And think how ill becometh him to slide  
Who seeketh heaven and comes of heavenly breath.  
Then farewell world! Thine uttermost I see:  
Eternal Love! Maintain Thy life in me.

## THE BARGAIN

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,  
By just exchange one for another given;  
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,  
There never was a better bargain driven:  
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,  
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:  
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,  
I cherish his because in me it bides:  
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(1564–1616)

William Shakespeare was born in the rustic village of Stratford-on-Avon in a laborer's cottage, which is still standing. Little is known of his early life. When he was but nineteen, he married Ann Hathaway eight years his senior, who two months later presented him with a daughter and a year after twins, a boy and a girl. The twin girl, Judith, alone grew up and later married Dr. Hall of Stratford.

At twenty-one he went to London, where he met, through his stage acquaintances, the young Earl of Southhampton, for whom he wrote his poem *Venus and Adonis*, and it is believed that about half his sonnets are dedicated to this nobleman. In 1598 Francis Meres writes of Shakespeare's "sugared sonnets" as being well known, and names six comedies and six tragedies as his work.

His father died in 1601, his mother in 1608, and in 1612 he retired from London to his native town, and there built himself an imposing brick house. Unfortunately this house was destroyed in the Eighteenth Century by a crazed clergyman in revenge for annoyance caused by public curiosity.

Shakespeare died on his fifty-second birthday, April 23, 1616. His tomb with its bust and inscription attracts countless visitors to the Stratford parish church. His sonnets surpass all others in vivid and musical quality, and, as a lyrist, he is as unique as a dramatist.

### SONNETS

When in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,  
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,



With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee,—and then my state  
(Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings,  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's long-since cancell'd woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight.  
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoan'd moan,  
Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
All losses are restor'd, and sorrows end.

Farewell! Thou art too dear for my possessing,  
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:  
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.  
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?  
And for that riches where is my deserving?  
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,  
And so my patent back again is swerving.  
Thyself thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,  
Or me, to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking;  
So thy great gift, upon misprison growing,  
Comes home again, on better judgment making.

Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter;  
In sleep a king, but, waking, no such matter.

How like a winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
What old December's bareness everywhere!  
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,  
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,  
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:  
Yet this abundant issue seemed to me  
But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit;  
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;  
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,  
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

When in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,  
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,  
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
I see their antique pen would have express'd  
Even such a beauty as you master now.  
So all their praises are but prophecies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;  
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,  
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:  
For we, which now behold these present days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove:  
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wandering bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error, and upon me prov'd,  
I never writ, and no man ever lov'd.

#### HARK! HARK! THE LARK AT HEAVEN'S GATE SINGS

Hark! Hark! The lark at heaven's gate sings,  
And Phoebus 'gins arise,  
His steeds to water at those springs  
On chaliced flowers that lies;  
And winking Mary-buds begin  
To ope their golden eyes;  
With everything that pretty bin,  
My lady sweet, arise.

#### SILVIA

Who is Silvia? What is she  
That all our swains commend her?  
Holy, fair, and wise is she;  
The heaven such grace did lend her,  
That she might admiréd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?  
For beauty lives with kindness:  
Love doth to her eyes repair  
To help him of his blindness,  
And being helped inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,  
That Silvia is excelling:  
She excels each mortal thing  
Upon the dull earth dwelling:  
To her let us garlands bring.



## FULL FATHOM FIVE

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:  
Ding-dong.  
Hark! Now I hear them—  
Ding-dong, bell!

## BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot;  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remembered not.

## SIR HENRY WOTTON

(1568–1639)

Sir Henry Wotton was a highly cultivated Englishman, courtier, diplomatist, musician, poet, and wit all in one. He was born only four years after Shakespeare and lived till 1639 to see the rise of Shakespeare's successor in poetic achievement, John Milton. Wotton was immersed in politics and society until he was fifty-six years old, when he was appointed provost of Eton. During the middle period of his life, he was secretary to the ill-fated Earl of Essex and later was attached to the court of James I.

Sent on a political mission to Germany, he defined an ambassador as a person sent "to lie abroad for the good of his country." James I resented this witticism and its author was for a time in disgrace. On his death his papers were published by his friend and fellow-angler, Isaac Walton, as *Reliquiae Wottonianae* with an admirable portrait, in which Wotton's playfulness as well as his poetic qualities stands clearly delineated.

Only two of Wotton's poems have survived him, *The Character of a Happy Life* and *On his Mistress the Queen of Bohemia*, who was a daughter of James I.

### THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught,  
That serveth not another's will!  
Whose armour is his honest thought,  
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are;  
Whose Soul is still prepared for death;  
Untied unto the world by care  
Of public fame or private breath:

Who envies none that chance doth raise,  
Or vice; who never understood  
How deepest wounds are given by praise;  
Nor rules of state, but rules of good:

Who hath his life from rumours freed;  
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;  
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,  
Nor ruin make accusers great:

Who God doth late and early pray  
More of His grace than gifts to lend;  
And entertains the harmless day  
With a religious book or friend:

This man is freed from servile bands  
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;  
Lord of himself, though not of lands;  
And having nothing, yet hath all.



## BEN JONSON

(1573–1637)

The greatest poet among Shakespeare's contemporaries was Ben Jonson. He was born in London, the son of a bricklayer. He was sent by his uncle to Westminster School but did not proceed to any university. After enlisting as a soldier he fought in the Low Countries. On his return he became a playwright and actor like his friend Shakespeare. Francis Meres mentions him in 1598 along with Shakespeare as a writer of tragedy.

His chief dramas were, *Sejanus*, *Catiline*, *Julius Caesar*, *Volpone*, and *The Alchemist*. As a dramatist, he is much inferior to Shakespeare, but he approaches him in his lyrics. His song, "Drink to me only with thine eyes," spells the high-water mark of song-writing. Some of his short epitaphs, viz., those on the Countess of Pembroke and on an unknown Elizabeth, have a verse quality that cannot be recaptured.

Like his namesake Dr. Johnson, he was fighting against disease and physical disability most of his life. King James I made him the first Poet Laureate in 1616. Browning has praised Jonson in a poem called *At the Mermaid*, which is the name of the tavern where Jonson and his circle of admirers used to meet.

### TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,  
And I will pledge with mine;  
Or leave a kiss but in the cup  
And I'll not look for wine.  
The thirst that from the soul doth rise  
Doth ask a drink divine;  
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,  
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,  
Not so much honoring thee  
As giving it a hope that there  
It could not withered be;  
But thou thereon didst only breathe  
And sent'st it back to me;  
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,  
Not of itself but thee!

#### THE NOBLE NATURE

It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make Man better be;  
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:  
    A lily of a day  
    Is fairer far in May,  
Although it fall and die that night—  
It was the plant and flower of Light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see;  
And in short measures life may perfect be.

## ROBERT HERRICK

(1591–1674)

Robert Herrick was the son of a London silversmith. He was educated for Holy Orders in the Church of England and was sent to the living of Dean Prior among the hills of Devonshire. Here he spent his ample leisure in writing pretty verse, which he afterwards collected and published under the title of *Hesperides* in 1648. He was ejected from his living by Cromwell a year later but returned at the Restoration in 1660, enjoying his benefice until his death in 1674.

Herrick shows the decline in great art which marks all the work of the court poets. Taine describes his poetry as “prettiness without beauty and polished expression without feeling.” His nature poems, however, exemplified by *To Daffodils*, have a sincerity that in his love poetry is often wanting.

### TO THE VIRGINS. TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may!  
Old time is still a-flying:  
And this same flower, that smiles today,  
Tomorrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
The higher he's a-getting,  
The sooner will his race be run,  
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,  
Then youth and blood are warmer;  
But, being spent, the worse and worst  
Times still succeed the former.



Then be not coy, but use your time;  
And while ye may, go marry;  
For, having lost but once your prime,  
You may for ever tarry.

TO ANTHEA

Bid me to live, and I will live  
Thy Protestant to be:  
Or bid me love, and I will give  
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,  
A heart as sound and free  
As in the whole world thou canst find,  
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,  
To honor thy decree:  
Or bid it languish quite away,  
And't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep  
While I have eyes to see:  
And having none, yet will I keep  
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair,  
Under that cypress tree:  
Or bid me die, and I will dare  
E'en death to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,  
The very eyes of me,  
And hast command of every part,  
To live and die for thee.

## TO DAFFODILS

Fair daffodils, we weep to see  
You haste away so soon:  
As yet the early rising Sun  
Has not attained his noon.  
Stay, stay,  
Until the hasting day  
Has run  
But to the even song;  
And having pray'd together, we  
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,  
We have as short a Spring;  
As quick a growth to meet decay  
As you or anything.  
We die,  
As your hours do, and dry  
Away  
Like to the Summer's rain;  
Or as the pearls of morning's dew  
Ne'er to be found again.

## GEORGE HERBERT

(1593-1632)

*The Temple* is Herbert's one little volume of religious verse, published after his death by his friends. It has gained for its author the title of "Holy George Herbert."

Herbert was born in Wales at Montgomery Castle; and at Bemerton Rectory, two miles from Salisbury, at the age of thirty-nine, he died of consumption. He was educated at Westminster School and Cambridge University. He began life as a courtier and died curate of a small parish of less than one hundred souls. Herbert's work is comparable to that of Pascal. He has the same devotion and precision in all that he writes. In addition he has a poetic gift of his own. His poetry inspired another poet, Henry Vaughan, to turn from praising worldly wit to praising God.

The devotion which we find in his pages is that found in the writers of the "Livre d'Heures," and there is in fact something Celtic in his whole temperament. His imagination is very lively, and his heart sensitive and feminine. Those who love Herbert's poetry love the writer for his testimony to the unseen Powers that uphold human life. His method of living was in some respects that of an ascetic; but we must remember that for many years he was dying of pulmonary disease. Honest to the core, upright, entirely devoting himself to the service of God, he has left a noble name as well as some peerless poetry.

### VIRTUE

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky,  
The dew shall weep thy fall tonight;  
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,  
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,  
Thy root is ever in its grave,  
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,  
A box where sweets compacted lie,  
My music shews ye have your closes,  
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like season'd timber, never gives;  
But though the whole world turn to coal,  
Then chiefly lives.

#### EASTER

I got me flowers to straw Thy way;  
I got me boughs off many a tree;  
But Thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought'st Thy sweets along with thee.

The sun arising in the East,  
Though he give light and the East perfume;  
If they should offer to contest  
With Thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,  
Though many suns to shine endeavor?  
We count three hundred, but we miss:  
There is but one, and that one ever.

#### THE TEMPER

How should I praise Thee, Lord! How should my rhymes  
Gladly engrave Thy love in steel,  
If what my soul doth feel sometimes,  
My soul might ever feel!



Although there were some forty heavens or more,  
Sometimes I peer above them all;  
Sometimes I hardly reach a score,  
Sometimes to hell I fall.

O rack me not to such a vast extent;  
These distances belong to Thee:  
The world's too little for Thy tent,  
A grave's too big for me.

Wilt thou meet arms with man that thou dost stretch  
A crumb of dust from heaven to hell?  
Will great God measure with a wretch?  
Shall he Thy stature spell?

O let me when Thy roof my soul hath hid,  
O let me roost and nestle there:  
Then of a sinner Thou art rid,  
And I of hope and fear.

Yet take Thy way; for sure Thy way is best:  
Stretch, or contract me, Thy poor debtor;  
This is but tuning of my breast,  
To make the music better.

Whether I fly with angels, fall with dust,  
Thy hands made both, and I am there:  
Thy power and love, my love and trust  
Make one place every where.

## LOVE

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.  
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning  
If I lacked anything.

*A guest (I answered) worthy to be here:*

*Love said, You shall be he.*

*I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my Dear,*

*I cannot look on Thee.*

*Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,*

*Who made the eyes but I?*

*Truth, Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame*

*Go where it doth deserve.*

*And know you not (says Love) who bore the blame?*

*My Dear, then I will serve.*

*You must sit down (says Love) and taste My meat:*

*So I did sit and eat.*

## JAMES SHIRLEY

(1596-1666)

Born in the latter years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Shirley carried into the era of Charles I some fragments of the great Elizabethan music. He wrote copiously as a dramatist, beginning with a comedy called *Love's Tricks*. He imitated Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* in a poem called *Echo*. In 1646 he published a volume of poetry chiefly erotic, and two thin volumes of Masques in 1653 and 1659. From the volume of 1653, which contained a Masque entitled *Cupid and Death*, comes the exquisite lyric of his on the might of fate, and from another Masque called *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses*, printed 1659, we extract the lines called *A Dirge*, which have a strength and grandeur such as we find in the best work of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Shirley was born and died in London, his death being hastened in 1666 by the great fire of that year.

### DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST

The glories of our blood and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things;  
There is no armor against fate,—  
Death lays his icy hand on kings;  
    Sceptre and crown  
    Must tumble down,  
And in the dust be equal made  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,  
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;  
But their strong nerves at last must yield,—  
They tame but one another still;  
    Early or late  
    They stoop to fate,  
And must give up their murmuring breath,  
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,—  
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;  
Upon death's purple altar, now,  
See where the victor victim bleeds!

    All heads must come  
    To the cold tomb,—  
Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.



## JOHN MILTON

(1608-1674)

John Milton was born in London December the ninth, 1608. His birthplace came to be a literary shrine but was destroyed in the great fire of 1666. His father was a scrivener, combining the duties of lawyer and broker; of his mother nothing is known, nor does her son ever refer to her. Milton went to St. Paul's School and at seventeen to Christ's College, Cambridge. At Cambridge he was nicknamed "The Lady of Christ's." After seven years at college, he spent five years of self-chosen study at Horton, twenty miles from London, where his father had retired.

In April, 1638, he left England and visited Paris, Genoa, Florence, Rome, and Naples. He intended visiting Greece but was recalled after sixteen months' absence by news of the impending civil war. He joined the party of Oliver Cromwell, whose secretary he later became.

Milton was very much a dissenter from the rigid policy of Archbishop Laud. He was so liberal-minded that he wrote and published four tracts advocating divorce on the ground of incompatibility only. He also defended unlicensed printing in his noble work entitled *Areopagitica*. Less noble are his writings in defence of Cromwell's beheading of Charles I. At the Restoration in 1660, Milton, whose labors for his party had cost him his eye-sight from excessive application, was in danger of suffering the fate of the other regicides, who were many of them hung, drawn, and quartered, and their heads exhibited to the public. To the credit of Charles II, he protected Milton from his enemies, urging his blindness as an excuse for taking no proceedings against him.

The blind poet in his poverty and neglect conceived and dictated to his daughters the twelve books of his sublime epic, *Paradise Lost*, which he published in 1667. *Paradise Regained*, a much inferior composition, and the dramatic poem, *Samson*

*Agonistes*, appeared in 1671, as his final work. He died in 1674, so peacefully that those in the room with him were unaware of his passing.

### L'ALLEGRO

Hence, loathéd Melancholy,  
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born  
In Stygian cave forlorn  
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!  
Find out some uncouth cell  
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings  
And the night-raven sings;  
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks  
As ragged as thy locks,  
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.  
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,  
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,  
And by men heart-easing Mirth;  
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,  
With two sister Graces more,  
To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore;  
Or whether (as some sager sing)  
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,  
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,  
As he met her once a-Maying,  
There on beds of violets blue  
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,  
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,  
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.  
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest, and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,  
Nods and becks and wreathéd smiles,  
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,  
And love to live in dimple sleek;  
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides.

Come, and trip it as you go,  
On the light fantastic toe;  
And in thy right hand lead with thee  
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;  
And if I give thee honor due,  
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,  
To live with her, and live with thee,  
In unreprieved pleasures free:  
To hear the lark begin his flight,  
And singing, startle the dull night,  
From his watch-tower in the skies,  
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;  
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,  
And at my window bid good-morrow,  
Through the sweetbriar, or the vine,  
Or the twisted eglantine:  
While the cock with lively din  
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,  
And to the stack, or the barn-door,  
Stoutly struts his dames before:  
Oft listening how the hounds and horn  
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,  
From the side of some hoar hill,  
Through the high wood echoing shrill:  
Sometime walking, not unseen,  
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,  
Right against the eastern gate  
Where the great Sun begins his state  
Robed in flames and amber light,  
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;  
While the ploughman, near at hand,  
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,  
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,  
And the mower whets his scythe,  
And every shepherd tells his tale  
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight my eye hath caught new pleasures  
Whilst the landscape round it measures;  
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,  
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;  
Mountains on whose barren breast  
The laboring clouds do often rest;  
Meadows trim with daisies pied,  
Shallow brooks and rivers wide;  
Towers and battlements it sees  
Bosomed high in tufted trees,  
Where perhaps some beauty lies,  
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.  
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes  
From between two agéd oaks,  
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met  
Are at their savory dinner set  
Of herbs and other country messes,  
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;  
And then in haste her bower she leaves,  
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;  
Or, if the earlier season lead,  
To the tanned haycock in the mead.  
Sometimes, with secure delight,  
The upland hamlets will invite,  
When the merry bells ring round,  
And the jocund rebecks sound  
To many a youth and many a maid  
Dancing in the chequered shade;  
And young and old come forth to play  
On a sunshine holiday,  
Till the livelong daylight fail:  
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,  
With stories told of many a feat,  
How faery Mab the junkets eat.  
She was pinched and pulled, she said;  
And he, by friar's lantern led,



Tells how the drudging goblin sweat  
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,  
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn  
That ten day-labourers could not end;  
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,  
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,  
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,  
And crop-full out of doors he flings,  
Ere the first cock his matin rings.  
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,  
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.  
Towered cities please us then,  
And the busy hum of men,  
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,  
In weeds of peace high triumph hold,  
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
Rain influence, and judge the prize  
Of wit or arms, while both contend  
To win her grace, whom all commend.  
There let Hymen oft appear  
In saffron robe, with taper clear,  
And pomp and feast and revelry,  
With mask and antique pageantry;  
Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream.  
Then to the well-trod stage anon,  
If Jonson's learnéd sock be on,  
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,  
Warble his native wood-notes wild.  
And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian Aires  
Married to immortal verse,  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce  
In notes, with many a winding bout  
Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out,

With wanton heed and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running,  
Untwisting all the chains that tie  
The hidden soul of harmony;  
That Orpheus' self may heave his head  
From golden slumber, on a bed  
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear  
Such strains as would have won the ear  
Of Pluto, to have quite set free  
His half-regain'd Eurydice.  
These delights if thou canst give,  
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

### IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,  
The brood of Folly without father bred!  
How little you bestead  
Or fill the fixéd mind with all your toys!  
Dwell in some idle brain,  
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess  
As thick and numberless  
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,  
Or likest hovering dreams,  
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.  
But hail, thou Goddess sage and holy,  
Hail, divinest Melancholy!  
Whose saintly visage is too bright  
To hit the sense of human sight,  
And therefore to our weaker view  
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;  
Black, but such as in esteem  
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,  
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove  
To set her beauty's praise above  
The sea nymphs and their powers offended.  
Yet thou art higher far descended:

Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore  
To solitary Saturn bore;  
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign  
Such mixture was not held a stain).  
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades  
He met her, and in secret shades  
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,  
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.  
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, steadfast, and demure,  
All in a robe of darkest grain,  
Flowing with majestic train,  
And sable stole of cypress lawn  
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.  
Come, but keep thy wonted state,  
With even step, and musing gait,  
And looks commercing with the skies,  
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:  
There, held in holy passion still,  
Forget thyself to marble, till  
With a sad leaden downward cast  
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:  
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,  
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,  
And hears the muses in a ring  
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:  
And add to these retired Leisure,  
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:—  
But first and chiefest, with thee bring  
Him that yon soars on golden wing  
Guiding the fiery-wheeléd throne,  
The cherub Contemplation;  
And the mute Silence hist along,  
'Less Philomel will deign a song  
In her sweetest saddest plight  
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,

While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke  
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.  
—Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy!  
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among  
I woo, to hear thy even-song;  
And missing thee, I walk unseen  
On the dry smooth-shaven green,  
To behold the wandering Moon  
Riding near her highest noon,  
Like one that had been led astray  
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,  
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.  
Oft on a plat of rising ground  
I hear the far-off Curfew sound  
Over some wide-water'd shore,  
Swinging slow with sullen roar:  
Or, if the air will not permit,  
Some still removéd place will fit,  
Where glowing embers through the room  
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;  
Far from all resort of mirth,  
Save the cricket on the hearth,  
Or the bellman's drowsy charm  
To bless the doors from nightly harm.  
Or let my lamp at midnight hour  
Be seen in some high lonely tower,  
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,  
With thrice-great Hermes; or unsphere  
The spirit of Plato, to unfold  
What worlds or what vast regions hold  
The immortal mind that hath forsook  
Her mansion in this fleshy nook;  
And of those demons that are found  
In fire, air, flood, or underground,



Whose power hath a true consent  
With planet or with element.  
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy  
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,  
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,  
Or the tale of Troy divine,  
Or what (though rare) of later age  
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.  
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power  
Might raise Musaeus from his bower;  
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing  
Such notes as, warbled to the string,  
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,  
And made Hell grant what love did seek;  
Or call up him that left half-told  
The story of Cambuscan bold,  
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,  
And who had Canace to wife,  
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,  
And of the wondrous Horse of Brass,  
On which the Tartar king did ride:  
And if aught else great bards beside  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung  
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,  
Of forests, and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear.  
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,  
Till civil-suited Morn appear,  
Not trick'd and frownc'd as she was wont  
With the Attic Boy to hunt,  
But kercheft in a comely cloud  
While rocking winds are piping loud,  
Or usher'd with a shower still,  
When the gust hath blown his fill,  
Ending on the rustling leaves  
With minute drops from off the eaves.

And when the sun begins to fling  
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring  
To archéd walks of twilight groves,  
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,  
Of pine, or monumental oak,  
Where the rude axe, with heavéd stroke,  
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt  
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.  
There in close covert by some brook  
Where no profaner eye may look,  
Hide me from day's garish eye,  
While the bee with honey'd thigh  
That at her flowery work doth sing,  
And the waters murmuring,  
With such consort as they keep,  
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;  
And let some strange mysterious dream  
Wave at his wings in airy stream  
Of lively portraiture displayed,  
Softly on my eyelids laid;  
And as I wake, sweet music breathe  
Above, about, or underneath,  
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,  
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.  
But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloisters' pale,  
And love the high embowéd roof,  
With antique pillars massy proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light.  
There let the pealing organ blow,  
To the full-voiced quire below,  
In service high and anthems clear,  
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age  
Find out the peaceful hermitage,  
The hairy gown, and mossy cell,  
Where I may sit and rightly spell  
Of every star that heaven doth shew,  
And every herb that sips the dew,  
Till old experience do attain  
To something like prophetic strain.  
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,  
And I with thee will choose to live.

#### ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide,  
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest He returning chide;  
“Doth God exact day labor, light denied?”  
I fondly ask; but Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need  
Either man’s work or His own gifts; who best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state  
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,  
And post o’er land and ocean without rest;  
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

## RICHARD LOVELACE

(1618–1658)

Lovelace is the best known and most brilliant of the Cavalier Poets. He was born at Woolwich in 1618 and died in poverty in an alley in Shoe Lane in his fortieth year. Like Wolsey he was a courtier, “And sounded all the depths and shoals of honor.”

He went to school at Charter House and then to Oxford, where the story goes, that after two years’ residence at Gloucester Hall, he was made an M.A. by the king, when he visited the university, solely for his beauty, at the request of a great lady. He went to court, went to the wars, went to his paternal estate at Canterbury, and in 1642 went to prison for carrying up a petition from Kentish men to the House of Commons.

In prison he wrote his immortal lines *To Althea*. Released on heavy bail, he spent his fortune in the service of the king and in aiding his poor friends. He was in prison again in 1648 and while there prepared a volume entitled *Lucasta* for publication in the following year. His *Lucasta* was Lucy Sacheverell, whom he sincerely loved, but who married another after receiving the false news that Lovelace had been killed at Dunkirk. His other work besides *To Althea* and *Lucasta* shows haste and carelessness and is deservedly forgotten.

### TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

When love with unconfined wings  
Hovers within my gates,  
And my divine Althea brings  
To whisper at the grates;  
When I lie tangled in her hair  
And fetter’d to her eye,  
The birds that wanton in the air  
Know no such liberty.



When flowing cups run swiftly round  
With no allaying Thames,  
Our careless heads with roses bound,  
Our hearts with loyal flames;  
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,  
When healths and draughts go free—  
Fishes that tipple in the deep  
Know no such liberty.

When, (like committed linnets), I  
With shriller throat shall sing  
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,  
And glories of my King;  
When I shall voice aloud how good  
He is, how great should be,  
Enlargéd winds, that curl the flood,  
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for an hermitage;  
If I have freedom in my love  
And in my soul am free,  
Angels alone, that soar above,  
Enjoy such liberty.

## HENRY VAUGHAN

(1621-1695)

Henry Vaughan was born in a farmhouse on the river Usk, five miles from Brecon, in 1621. He had a twin brother named Thomas. The boys were educated at the Rev. Matthew Herbert's school at Llangattock and afterwards went to Oxford.

Vaughan's early work consisted of amatory verses addressed to Amoret, written in the light easy style of the day. Ben Jonson was the chief object of his admiration. Chancing to alight on a copy of Herbert's *Temple*, he was so impressed that he changed from a devotee of profane love to a disciple of divine love. His new study of theology, and especially of the poetry of "the blessed man, Mr. George Herbert," resulted in the publication of *Silex Scintillans*, a volume of religious verse, in 1651. Many of his poems are rehandlings of themes already dealt with by Herbert, in fact some few are almost copies. Vaughan has a taste for spiritual things and an ear for choice melody; but he is neither as strong, nor intense, nor original, as his master. Both master and scholar have a style that belongs to them alone. This style consists of elegant conceits, interwoven with lamentations and pious ejaculations. It renounces the social world as a "world of sugared lies," and regards all things seen as containing images and foreshadowings of the invisible things of God. This mystic poetry has had no successors in English literature except Quarles' *Emblems*, which although it has the outward form has not the vital spirit of Vaughan and Herbert.

Vaughan's brother, Thomas, who became a clergyman, wrote a preface to *Silex Scintillans* in appreciation of his twin-brother's work. Thomas died of the Plague in 1665, and although Henry lived until 1695, thirty years later, he wrote no more poetry after his brother's death.

### DEPARTED FRIENDS

They are all gone into the world of light,  
And I alone sit lingering here!  
Their very memory is fair and bright,  
And my sad thoughts doth clear;

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,  
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,—  
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dressed  
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,  
Whose light doth trample on my days,—  
My days which are at best but dull and hoary,  
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy hope! and high humility,—  
High as the heavens above!  
These are your walks, and you have shewed them me  
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death,—the jewel of the just,—  
Shining nowhere but in the dark!  
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,  
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,  
At first sight, if the bird be flown,  
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,  
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams  
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,  
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,  
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,  
Her captive flames must needs burn there;  
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,  
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all  
Created glories under Thee!  
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall  
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill  
My perspective still as they pass;  
Or else remove me hence unto that hill  
Where I shall need no glass.

#### PEACE

My soul there is a country  
Afar beyond the stars,  
Where stands a wingéd sentry  
All skilful in the wars:  
There, above noise and danger,  
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,  
And One born in a manger  
Commands the beauteous files.  
He is the gracious Friend,  
And—O my soul, awake!—  
Did in pure love descend  
To die here for thy sake.  
If thou canst get but thither,  
There grows the flower of Peace,  
The Rose that cannot wither,  
Thy fortress and thine ease.  
Leave then thy foolish ranges,  
For none can thee secure  
But One who never changes,  
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

#### THE RETREAT

Happy those early days when I  
Shined in my angel-infancy!  
Before I understood this place  
Appointed for my second race,  
Or taught my soul to fancy ought  
But a white celestial thought:  
When yet I had not walked above  
A mile or two from my first love,



And looking back, at that short space,  
Could see a glimpse of His bright face:  
While on some *gilded cloud* or *flower*  
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,  
And in those weaker glories spy  
Some shadows of eternity;  
Before I taught my tongue to wound  
My conscience with a sinful sound,  
Or had the black art to dispense  
A several sin to every sense,  
But felt through all this fleshy dress  
Bright *shoots* of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,  
And tread again that ancient track;  
That I might once more reach that plain,  
Where first I left my glorious train;  
From whence the enlightened spirit sees  
The shady City of palm trees.  
But ah! my soul with too much stay  
Is drunk and staggers in the way!  
Some men a forward motion love,  
But I by backward steps would move;  
And when this dust falls to the urn  
In that state I came return.

## JOHN BUNYAN

(1628–1688)

John Bunyan was born at Elstow, two miles from Bedford, and was baptized on November thirtieth, 1628. He died in London at the age of sixty and is buried in Bunhill Fields. Bunyan's father was a tinker and he brought his son up to follow his trade. In 1660 John was imprisoned for preaching the gospel without authorization from the Church of England. He was kept in confinement for twelve years, and during the entire time had in his cell but two books—the *Bible* and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. The *Bible* he learned by heart and caught its poetry and noble language.

*Grace Abounding*, one of Bunyan's first books, written shortly after his imprisonment, is a long soul-confession interwoven with the story of the author's life. It was in the last year of his confinement that he wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress*, which stands far above all his other works for the hold it has taken on the human race. *The Holy War*, although so highly praised by Macaulay, is a cumbersome composition in comparison. His *Book for Boys and Girls* appeals more to theologians than to school children for whom Bunyan wrote it. It has some choice humor and is very characteristic of its author. Its versification is for the most part a kind of rhymed prose which is always didactic; yet it has a peculiar strength and quality, which makes a powerful appeal to the great middle class of readers. Bunyan printed it two years before his death, and it was his last work of importance. The *Pilgrim's Progress*, from which our two selections are taken, will always remain the imperishable epic of mankind.

### PILGRIM SONG

Who would true valor see  
Let him come hither:  
One here will constant be,  
Come wind, come weather;  
There's no discouragement  
Shall make him once relent  
His first avowed intent  
To be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round  
With dismal stories  
Do but themselves confound,  
His strength the more is.  
No lion can him fright;  
He'll with a giant fight;  
But he will have a right  
To be a pilgrim.

Hobgoblin, nor foul fiend,  
Can daunt his spirit;  
He knows he in the end  
Shall life inherit.  
Then fancies, flee away;  
He'll not fear what men say;  
He'll labor night and day  
To be a pilgrim.

#### SHEPHERD BOY'S SONG

He that is down needs fear no fall,  
He that is low, no pride;  
He that is humble ever shall  
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,  
Little be it or much:  
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,  
Because Thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is  
That go on pilgrimage:  
Here little, and hereafter bliss,  
Is best from age to age.

## ISAAC WATTS

(1674–1748)

Isaac Watts was born at Southampton in 1674 and died in London at the age of seventy-four. He is chiefly known as the author of a verse-paraphrase of the psalms and of a book for children, *Divine and Moral Songs*. Watts was a Non-conformist and a Calvinist and exercised a great influence on John and Charles Wesley and their followers.

He was for many years a private chaplain in the families of Sir John Hartopp and Lady Abdy. During his entire life he was handicapped by poor health and by a small stature; but his great animation partly offset his physical disabilities. The quality of his poetry rises occasionally to a very high level but is like Bunyan's always didactic. He is the author of several of the noblest hymns in English Hymnology.

### THE LAND OF PURE DELIGHT

There is a land of pure delight  
Where saints immortal reign,  
Infinite day excludes the night  
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers;  
Death, like a narrow stream, divides  
That heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood  
Stand drest in living green:  
So to the Jews old Canaan stood  
While Jordan rolled between.



But timorous mortals start and shrink  
To cross this narrow sea,  
And linger shivering on the brink,  
And fear to launch away.

O could we all our doubts remove,  
These gloomy doubts that rise,  
And see the Canaan that we love  
With unclouded eyes—

Could we but climb where Moses stood,  
And view the landscape o'er,  
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood  
Should fright us from the shore.

## THOMAS GRAY

(1716–1771)

Thomas Gray was born in London on the twenty-sixth of December, 1716. His father was on the stock-exchange and seems to have been a selfish, extravagant, and violent man. Fortunately for Thomas his uncle, an Eton professor, was able to take him under his care. At Eton he met Horace Walpole, and the two boys soon became great friends. After leaving Eton, Gray proceeded to Cambridge, where he did not work for a degree but spent his time reading Latin and English literature.

He continued this work on leaving the university, spending two years travelling in France and Italy with Horace Walpole. After his return his father died, and he and his mother went to live at Stoke Pogis near Windsor with his mother's two sisters. It was here that he wrote his famous *Elegy*, which was handed about in manuscript for several years before its publication as a sixpenny pamphlet in 1750. It was instantly popular and made Gray's reputation as a poet. In 1757 he was offered the post of Poet-laureate but declined it. Five years later, he applied to Lord Bute for a professorship in Modern History at Cambridge, but in vain. Subsequently when the chair fell vacant, he was appointed by the Duke of Grafton without requesting it. Although he accepted the position, he gave no lectures owing to ill health; and after but two years' residence in Cambridge, he died in 1771.

Gray was the most unproductive of English poets. His one worth-while work is his *Elegy*, which is still supreme in popular favour; and due to its melody and perfect workmanship, it is likely to remain so as long as English literature endures.

### ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea;  
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds;  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save, that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient, solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms—that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a moldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield;  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour:  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,  
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,  
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust,  
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre;

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;  
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,  
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,  
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined,  
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;



The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,  
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride,  
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;  
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life,  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect,  
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,  
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelled by the unlettered Muse,  
The place of fame and elegy supply;  
And many a holy text around she strews,  
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned;  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;  
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;  
Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonored dead,  
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;  
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain shall say:  
Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,  
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn:

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,  
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;  
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,  
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

One morn I missed him on the customed hill,  
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;  
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,  
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

The next, with dirges due in sad array,  
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne:—  
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay  
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.

#### THE EPITAPH

*Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,  
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown:  
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,  
And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;  
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,  
He gained from heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode;  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),  
The bosom of his Father and his God.*

## WILLIAM COWPER

(1731-1800)

Cowper is known today as the author of *John Gilpin*. To the past generation he was known as the author of the *Olney Hymns*. He was an only child and delicate from his birth. It was his mother's care that kept him in life. To her he has written his most beautiful poem entitled, *On Receipt of My Mother's Picture*.

Cowper attended Westminster School and later studied law, and at twenty-three he was called to the bar. He was too nervous to practice and was driven into actual insanity by the prospect of an examination for an office in the House of Lords. In 1763 he was committed to a lunatic asylum at St. Albans. When he left it, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Unwin and his wife. Mr. Unwin had a curate, John Newton, and when he was killed by a fall from his horse, Newton took Cowper under his charge. He seems to have made Cowper's malady worse by his Calvinistic teaching. Cowper believed himself a lost soul outside the mercy of God.

In 1773 he had another attack of insanity, and as he had done on the occasion of the first attack, he attempted suicide. When he left the asylum, he found a home with Mrs. Unwin, whose care and nursing he has praised in his lines which end with the refrain, "My Mary," and in his *Sonnet to Mrs. Unwin*. Under her influence he resumed literary work and produced a long poem called *The Task*, written in blank verse and published in 1785. After this he translated Homer's *Iliad*, as Pope had done before him. His last poem, called *The Castaway*, is one of the saddest pieces in English literature. In it he describes himself as cast away by God and drowning in a fathomless ocean. This delusion was the prelude of a final attack of insanity to which he succumbed in 1800. Mrs. Browning wrote of Cowper:

O poets! From a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing;

O Christians! At your cross of Hope a hopeless hand was clinging!

## THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK

I am monarch of all I survey;  
My right there is none to dispute;  
From the center all round to the sea  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.  
O Solitude! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,  
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,  
I must finish my journey alone,  
Never hear the sweet music of speech;  
I start at the sound of my own.  
The beasts that roam over the plain  
My form with indifference see;  
They are so unacquainted with man,  
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, Friendship, and Love  
Divinely bestow'd upon man,  
Oh, had I the wings of a dove  
How soon would I taste you again!  
My sorrows I then might assuage  
In the ways of religion and truth,  
Might learn from the wisdom of age,  
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,  
Convey to this desolate shore  
Some cordial endearing report  
Of a land I shall visit no more:  
My friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me?  
O tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!  
Compared with the speed of its flight,  
The tempest itself lags behind,  
And the swift-wingéd arrows of light.  
When I think of my own native land  
In a moment I seem to be there;  
But alas! recollection at hand  
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,  
The beast is laid down in his lair;  
Even here is a season of rest,  
And I to my cabin repair.  
There's mercy in every place,  
And mercy, encouraging thought!  
Gives even affliction a grace  
And reconciles man to his lot.

#### THE LILY

The noon was shady and soft airs  
Swept Ouse's silent tide,  
When 'scaped from literary cares  
I wandered by his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race  
And high in pedigree,  
(Two nymphs adorned with every grace  
That spaniel found for me)

Now wantoned, lost in flags and reeds,  
Now starting into sight,  
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads  
With scarce less rapid flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed  
His lilies newly blown:  
Their beauty I intent surveyed,  
And one I wished my own.



With cane extended far I sought  
To steer it close to land,  
But still the prize though nearly caught  
Escaped my eager hand.

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains  
With fixed considerate face,  
And puzzling set his puppy brains  
To comprehend the case.

But with a cheer-up loud and strong,  
Dispersing all his dream,  
I thence withdrew and followed long  
The windings of the stream.

My ramble ended, I returned,  
Beau trotting on before,  
The floating wreath again discerned  
And plunging left the shore.

I saw him with that lily cropped  
Impatient swim to meet  
My swift approach, and soon he dropped  
The lily at my feet.

Charmed with the sight, *The world* (I cried)  
*Shall hear of this thy deed;*  
*My dog shall mortify the pride*  
*Of man's superior breed:*

*But chief myself I will enjoin,*  
*Awake at duty's call,*  
*To shew a love as prompt as thine*  
*To Him who gives me all.*

## BOADICEA

When the British warrior queen,  
Bleeding from the Roman rods,  
Sought with an indignant mien,  
Counsel of her country's gods.

Sage beneath the spreading oak  
Sat the Druid, hoary chief;  
Ev'ry burning word he spoke  
Full of rage, and full of grief.

Princess! if our aged eyes  
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs  
'Tis because resentment ties  
All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word  
In the blood that she has spill'd;  
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,  
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome, for empire far renown'd,  
Tramples on a thousand states;  
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—  
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

Other Romans shall arise,  
Heedless of a soldier's name;  
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,  
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs  
From the forests of our land,  
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings  
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Caesar never knew  
Thy posterity shall sway;  
Where his eagles never flew,  
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,  
Pregnant with celestial fire,  
Bending as he swept the chords  
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,  
Felt them in her bosom glow;  
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;  
Dying hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,  
Heaven awards the vengeance due:  
Empire is on us bestowed,  
Shame and ruin wait for you.

#### JOHN GILPIN

John Gilpin was a citizen  
Of credit and renown,  
A train-band captain eke was he  
Of famous London Town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,  
Though wedded we have been  
These twice ten tedious years yet we  
No holiday have seen.

Tomorrow is our wedding-day,  
And we will then repair  
Unto the Bell at Edmonton  
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister and my sister's child,  
Myself and children three  
Will fill the chaise, so you must ride  
On horseback after we.

He soon replied, I do admire  
Of womankind but one,  
And you are she, my dearest dear,  
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold  
As all the world doth know,  
And my good friend, the calender,  
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mistress Gilpin, That's well said,  
And for that wine is dear  
We will be furnished with our own,  
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife,  
O'erjoyed was he to find  
That though on pleasure she was bent,  
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,  
But yet was not allowed  
To drive up to the door lest all  
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,  
Where they did all get in,  
Six precious souls, and all agog  
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,  
Were never folks so glad;  
The stones did rattle underneath,  
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side  
Seized fast the flowing mane;  
And up he got, in haste to ride,  
But soon came down again.

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,  
His journey to begin,  
When, turning round his head, he saw  
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,  
Although it grieved him sore,  
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,  
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers  
Were suited to their mind,  
When Betty screaming came down-stairs;  
"The wine is left behind."

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,  
My leathern belt likewise,  
In which I bear my trusty sword  
When I do exercise.

Now Mistress Gilpin—careful soul!—  
Had two stone bottles found,  
To hold the liquor that she loved,  
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,  
Through which the belt he drew,  
And hung a bottle on each side,  
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be  
Equipped from top to toe,  
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,  
He manfully did throw.



Now see him mounted once again  
Upon his nimble steed,  
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones  
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road  
Beneath his well-shod feet,  
The snorting beast began to trot,  
Which galled him in his seat.

So, "Fair and softly," John he cried,  
But John he cried in vain;  
The trot became a gallop soon,  
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must  
Who cannot sit upright,  
He grasped the mane with both his hands,  
And eke with all his might.

His horse, which never in that sort  
Had handled been before,  
What thing upon his back had got  
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;  
Away went hat and wig;  
He little dreamt when he set out,  
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,  
Like streamer long and gay,  
Till, loop and button failing both,  
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern  
The bottles he had slung;  
A bottle swinging at each side,  
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,  
Up flew the windows all;  
And every soul cried out: "Well done!"  
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?  
His fame soon spread around;  
He carries weight! he rides a race!  
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,  
'Twas wonderful to view  
How in a trice the turnpike-men  
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down  
His reeking head full low,  
The bottles twain behind his back  
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,  
Most piteous to be seen,  
Which made the horse's flanks to smoke  
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,  
With leathern girdle braced;  
For all might see the bottle necks  
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington  
These gambols he did play,  
Until he came unto the Wash  
Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw, the wash about  
On both sides of the way,  
Just like unto a trundling mop,  
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton, his loving wife  
From the balcony espied  
Her tender husband, wondering much  
To see how he did ride.

“Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here’s the house!”  
They all at once did cry;  
“The dinner waits, and we are tired!”  
Said Gilpin: “So am I!”

But yet his horse was not a whit  
Inclined to tarry there;  
For why?—his owner had a house  
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,  
Shot by an archer strong;  
So did he fly—which brings me to  
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,  
And sore against his will,  
Till at his friend the calender’s  
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see  
His neighbor in such trim,  
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,  
And thus accosted him:

“What news? what news? your tidings tell;  
Tell me you must and shall—  
Say why bareheaded you are come,  
Or why you come at all?”

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,  
And loved a timely joke;  
And thus unto the calender  
In merry guise he spoke:

“I came because your horse would come  
And, if I well forebode,  
My hat and wig will soon be here—  
They are upon the road.”

The calender, right glad to find  
His friend in merry pin,  
Returned him not a single word,  
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;  
A wig that flowed behind,  
A hat not much the worse for wear,  
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn  
Thus shewed his ready wit:  
“My head is twice as big as yours,  
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away  
That hangs upon your face;  
And stop and eat, for well you may  
Be in a hungry case.”

Said John: “It is my wedding-day,  
And all the world would stare.  
If wife should dine at Edmonton,  
And I should dine at Ware.”

So turning to his horse, he said:  
“I am in haste to dine;  
’Twas for your pleasure you came here.  
You shall go back for mine.”

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!  
For which he paid full dear;  
For, while he spake, a braying ass  
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he  
Had heard a lion roar,  
And galloped off with all his might,  
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went Gilpin's hat and wig:  
He lost them sooner than at first;  
For why?—they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw  
Her husband posting down  
Into the country far away,  
She pulled out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth she said,  
That drove them to the Bell:  
“This shall be yours, when you bring back  
My husband safe and well.”

The youth did ride, and soon did meet  
John coming back amain!  
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,  
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,  
And gladly would have done,  
The frightened steed he frightened more,  
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went post-boy at his heels,  
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss  
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road  
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,  
With post-boy scampering in the rear;  
They raised the hue and cry:



“Stop thief! Stop thief! A highwayman!”  
Not one of them was mute:  
And each and all that passed that way  
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turn-pike gates again  
Flew open in short space;  
The tollmen thinking as before  
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,  
For he got first to town,  
Nor stopped till where he did get up  
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, “Long live the King,  
And Gilpin, long live he!”  
And when he next doth ride abroad,  
May I be there to see!

## ROBERT BURNS

(1759-1796)

The two names that have most deeply enshrined themselves in the minds of English-speaking people are those of John Bunyan and Robert Burns. The *Pilgrim's Progress* appeared in 1678, the Kilmarnock Edition of Burns in 1786. Both were original writers gifted with a rare poetic fancy. Both departed almost entirely from the methods and ways of thinking of their own times. Both were at war with official and organized religion, and yet both at heart were profoundly religious.

Robert Burns was born on the twenty-fifth of January, 1759. His father, a gentleman's gardener, with the help of an hundred pounds, lent him by his employer, set up a farm of his own at Mount Oliphant, when Robert was six years old. It was an unprofitable undertaking in spite of the assistance of his two able-bodied sons, Robert and Gilbert. *The Cottar's Saturday Night* gives a faithful picture of the elder Burns and shows him as a man of noble instincts and honest life. He died in 1783 and the two young men took the farm of Mossgiel in the parish of Mauchline, where they sought to maintain themselves and their mother. They plowed and sowed for four years and reaped little but bitterness.

In 1786 Burns published his first volume of poems at Kilmarnock and was able to send his brother Gilbert two hundred pounds to take a new farm at Elliesland in March, of the following year. Five months after the brothers went to their new farm, Robert married Jean Armour. The farm again proved unfruitful, and in 1791 the brothers in disgust gave up Elliesland, and Robert obtained a post in the Excise at Dumfries with a meagre salary of seventy pounds wherewith to support his wife and family. His associates at Dumfries had little sympathy with Burns' fervid interest in the French Revolution and not much in common with him in other ways. Sad days of poverty and failing health, brightened by hours of inspiration, came to

an end in July, 1796. Burns' fame has been steadily growing since his death.

### O, MY LUVE'S LIKE A RED, RED ROSE

O, my Luve's like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June;  
O, my Luve's like the melodie  
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,  
So deep in luve am I;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry;

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!  
And fare thee weel awhile!  
And I will come again, my Luve,  
Though it were ten thousand mile.

### MARY MORRISON

O Mary, at the window be!  
It is the wished, the trysted hour!  
Those smiles and glances let me see  
That make the miser's treasure poor;  
How blithely wad I bide the stoure,  
A weary slave frae sun to sun,  
Could I the rich reward secure,  
The lovely Mary Morrison.

Yestreen when to the trembling string  
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',  
To thee my fancy took its wing,—  
I sat, but neither heard nor saw;  
Though this was fair, and that was braw,  
And yon the toast of a' the town,  
I sighed, and said among them a',  
“Ye are na Mary Morrison.”

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace  
Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee?  
Or canst thou break that heart of his,  
Whase only faut is loving thee?  
If love for love thou wilt na gie,  
At least be pity to me shown;  
A thought ungentle canna be  
The thought o' Mary Morrison.

#### HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around  
The castle o' Montgomery,  
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,  
Your waters never drumlie!  
There simmer first unfauld her robes,  
And there the longest tarry;  
For there I took the last fareweel  
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,  
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,  
As underneath their fragrant shade  
I clasped her to my bosom!  
The golden hours, on angel wings,  
Flew o'er me and my dearie;  
For dear to me as light and life  
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and locked embrace,  
Our parting was fu' tender;  
And, pledging aft to meet again,  
We tore oursels asunder;  
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,  
That nipt my flower sae early!  
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,  
That wraps my Highland Mary.

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips  
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!  
And closed for aye the sparkling glance  
That dwelt on me sae kindly!  
And mouldering now in silent dust  
The heart that lo'ed me dearly!  
But still within my bosom's core  
Shall live my Highland Mary.

#### TO A MOUSE

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', timorous beastie,  
Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!  
Thou need na start away sae hasty,  
Wi' bickerin' brattle!  
I wad be laith to run an' chase thee,  
Wi' murdering pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion  
Has broken Nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion  
Which makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou mayst thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request:  
I'll get a blessin' with the lave  
An' never miss't.



Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!  
It's silly wa's the winds are strewin'!  
An' naething now to big a new ane  
O foggage green!  
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',  
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,  
An' weary winter comin' fast,  
An' cozy here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell.  
Till crash! the cruel coulter past  
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble  
Has cost thee many a weary nibble!  
Now thou's turned out for a' thy trouble,  
But house or hald,  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
An' cranreuch cold!

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain:  
The best laid schemes of mice and men  
Gang aft agley,  
An' leave us naught but grief an' pain  
For promised joy.

Still thou art blessed, compared wi' me.  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But, och! I backward cast my e'e  
On prospects drear!  
An' forward, though I canna see,  
I guess an' fear.

## FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT

Is there for honest poverty  
That hangs his head, and a' that;  
The coward slave, we pass him by,  
We dare be poor for a' that!  
For a' that and a' that,  
Our toils obscure, and a' that;  
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gold for a' that.

What though on homely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddin' grey and a' that;  
Gie fools their silk and knaves their wine,  
A man's a man for a' that;  
For a' that and a' that,  
Their tinsel show and a' that;  
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,  
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,  
Wha struts and stares and a' that;  
Though hundreds worship at his word,  
He's but a coof for a' that;  
For a' that and a' that,  
His ribbon, star and a' that;  
The man of independent mind  
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can make a belted knight,  
A marquis, duke, and a' that;  
But an honest man's aboon his might,  
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that!  
For a' that and a' that!  
Their dignities and a' that:  
The pith o' sense and pride o' worth,  
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will for a' that,  
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,  
May bear the gree, and a' that:  
For a' that and a' that,  
It's comin' yet for a' that,  
That man to man, the warld o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that.

#### JESSIE

Although thou maun never be mine,  
Although even hope is denied!  
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing  
Than aught in the world beside—  
Jessie!

#### CHORUS

Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear,  
Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear;  
Thou art sweet as the smile  
When fond lovers meet,  
And soft as the parting tear—  
Jessie!

I mourn through the gay, gaudy day,  
As, hopeless, I muse on thy charms;  
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,  
For then I am lock'd in thy arms—  
Jessie!

I guess by the dear angel smile,  
I guess by the love-rolling e'e;  
But why urge the tender confession  
'Gainst fortune's fell cruel decree—  
Jessie!

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

(1770-1850)

William Wordsworth is the poet of Nature rather than of man. He was not social but solitary in his habits. In this aloofness from the world, he approaches the religious poets, Herbert and Vaughan; but he is not theological, Nature being his textbook rather than the Bible.

Wordsworth was born in Cumberland in 1770; and died at Grasmere in 1850. He went to a local school and finally to Cambridge, where instead of regular study, he roamed at night about the college grounds muttering poetry. He tells us in his *Prelude* the dullness of his days at Cambridge. From the university he went to France, where his head was turned by the strong wine of the French Revolution. He had an ardent love-affair with a French girl, who bore him a daughter; but whom he did not marry. His friends, to recall him from Paris, cut off his supplies, and obliged him to return to England and safety.

When the Revolution took the form of general bloodshed and the King and later the Queen were dragged by a frenzied crowd to the guillotine, Wordsworth became estranged from his former friends and, like Burke, took up a hostile attitude to the new regime.

He made the acquaintance of Coleridge and lived as his neighbor for some time at Alfoxden in Dorset; the result being *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798. In a long preface to the second edition in 1802, Wordsworth sets up new rules for the poetic art,—maintaining that the language of poetry should be the language used in every-day life. Byron thereupon described Wordsworth as an “apostate from poetic rule,”

Who both by precept and example shows  
That prose is verse and verse is merely prose;  
Convincing all, by demonstration plain,  
Poetic souls delight in prose insane.

Wordsworth criticizes Gray adversely for his use of personification and classic phrases: yet while he was perhaps justified in the main in his attack on the school of Pope and Gray, nothing in Wordsworth is grander than Gray's *Elegy* or more sure of a permanent place in the best poetry.

Byron laughed at Wordsworth for his simplicity and ridiculed his poem of the *Idiot Boy*, saying that the bard was the hero of the story. But Wordsworth plodded on, and in the end popular favor silenced his critics. Matthew Arnold has done much, by the Preface he wrote to his *Selections* from Wordsworth, to introduce him to continental readers, who have never ranked him with Byron and Shelley. There is no humor in Wordsworth, and no dramatic power; but there is a sense of the beauty of the world around us and a feeling of fellowship with "the meanest flower that blows." For a man to acquire this sense and this fellowship, under the poet's guidance, is to add to the happiness of life.

#### THE DAFFODILS

I wander'd lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretch'd in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—  
A Poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company!  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought;



For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

### THE RAINBOW

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The child is father of the man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

### LUCY

She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove;  
A maid whom there were none to praise,  
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half-hidden from the eye!  
Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

## SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

She was a phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;  
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;  
A dancing shape, an image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A spirit, yet a woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food,  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller between life and death:  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect woman, nobly planned  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a spirit still, and bright  
With something of an angel-light.

## LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sat reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—  
But the least motion which they made,  
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If such belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

## THE SOLITARY REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass!  
Reaping and singing by herself;  
Stop here, or gently pass!

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain;  
O listen! for the vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt  
More welcome notes to weary bands  
Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
Among Arabian sands:  
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago:  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of today?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang  
As if her song would have no ending;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending;—  
I listen'd, motionless and still;  
And as I mounted up the hill,  
The music in my heart I bore  
Long after it was heard no more.

#### THE TABLES TURNED

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;  
Or surely you'll grow double:  
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;  
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet,  
How sweet his music! on my life  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher:  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore that Nature brings;  
Our meddling intellect  
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:—  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.



## TO A SKYLARK

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?  
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?  
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,  
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain  
( 'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:  
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing  
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood  
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

## ODE ON IMMORTALITY

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—  
Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,  
And lovely is the rose;  
The moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare;  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
And while the young lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong.  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;—  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:  
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,  
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
And all the earth is gay;  
Land and sea  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every beast keep holiday;—  
Thou child of joy  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
Shepherd-boy!

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call  
Ye to each other make; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
My heart is at your festival,  
My head hath its coronal,  
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
Oh evil day! if I were sullen  
While earth herself is adorning  
This sweet May-morning;

And the children are culling  
On every side  
In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm  
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—  
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!  
—But there's a tree, of many, one,  
A single field which I have look'd upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is gone:  
The pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat:  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing boy,  
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;  
The youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a mother's mind,

And no unworthy aim,  
The homely nurse doth all she can  
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,  
Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,  
A six-years' darling of a pigmy size!  
See, where mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes!  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly learned art;  
A wedding or a festival,  
A mourning or a funeral;  
And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song:  
Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife!  
But it will not be long  
Ere this be thrown aside,  
And with new joy and pride  
The little actor cons another part;  
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage;  
As if his whole vocation  
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
Thy soul's immensity;  
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
Haunted forever by the eternal Mind,—  
Mighty prophet! Seer blest!  
On whom those truths do rest

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,  
A Presence which is not to be put by;  
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,  
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?  
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,  
And custom lie upon thee with a weight  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That Nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive!  
The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest,  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—  
—Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized,  
High instincts before which our mortal nature  
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,



Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal silence; truths that wake,  
To perish never;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,  
Nor man, nor boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy!  
Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither;  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!  
And let the young lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound!  
We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts today  
Feel the gladness of the May!  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now forever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind;  
In the primal sympathy  
Which, having been, must ever be;  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering;  
In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
Forbode not any severing of our loves !  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;  
I only have relinquish'd one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual sway :  
I love the brooks which down their channels fret  
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they ;  
The innocent brightness of a new-born day  
Is lovely yet ;  
The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

#### THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us ; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers ;  
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not. Great God ! I'd rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

## SIR WALTER SCOTT

(1771–1832)

The author of the *Waverly Novels* was born in Edinburgh in 1771, and was one year younger than Wordsworth. His father was a barrister, and on leaving Edinburgh University Scott studied for the law, read Scotch ballads, and translated Goethe. In 1802 and 1803 he gave the world his three volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy*, which at once made him famous. Two years later he published *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which was followed by *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*.

In 1814, after being eclipsed by the fame of Byron, Scott took to the novel and produced *Waverly*, the first of a brilliant series of upward of twenty novels written in ten years. He broke down under the strain and went to Italy to regain his health, but finding absence from Scotland unendurable, he returned in 1832 to die at Abbotsford. His body was interred beside his wife's in the old Abbey of Dryburgh.

Scott's is the poetry that schoolboys drink in with avidity. It is obvious and martial and is comparable to Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*. It, however, does not hold the same charm in after years. Scott threw a glamour of romance over every theme he touched. He is the most subjective of all poets and of all novelists. He is a descendant of the Troubadours and ballad-mongers of the middle ages and the last of the Knightly band, whose mission was to subdue evil with the sword (contrary to our belief today in a world governed by peace and brotherhood), and one who from his heart could sing:

O War! Thou hast thy fierce delight,  
Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!

### PATRIOTISM

Breathes there a man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land?  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned  
As home his footsteps he hath turned  
From wandering on a foreign strand!

If such there breathe, go, mark him well:  
For him no minstrel raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;  
Despite those titles, power and pelf,  
The wretch, concentrèd all in self,  
Living shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

#### ROSABELLE

O listen, listen, ladies gay!  
No haughty feat of arms I tell;  
Soft is the note, and sad the lay  
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

“Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!  
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!  
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,  
Nor tempt the stormy firth today.

“The blackening wave is edged with white;  
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;  
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,  
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

“Last night the gifted Seer did view  
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;  
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;  
Why cross the gloomy firth today?”

“’Tis not because Lord Lindesay’s heir  
Tonight at Roslin leads the ball,  
But that my ladye-mother there  
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

“’Tis not because the ring they ride,  
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,  
But that my sire the wine will chide  
If ’tis not fill’d by Rosabelle.”

—O’er Roslin all the dreary night  
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;  
’Twas broader than the watch-fire’s light,  
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin’s castled rock,  
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;  
’Twas seen from Dryden’s groves of oak,  
And seen from cavern’d Hawthornden.

Seem’d all on fire that chapel proud  
Where Roslin’s chiefs uncoffin’d lie,  
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,  
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem’d all on fire within, around,  
Deep sacristy and altar’s pale;  
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,  
And glimmer’d all the dead men’s mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,  
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—  
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh  
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin’s barons bold—  
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;  
Each one the holy vault doth hold—  
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each Saint Clair was buried there,  
With candle, with book, and with knell;  
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung  
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.



## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

(1772-1834)

Coleridge's early years were spent at Ottery St. Mary—one of the most picturesque of Devonshire's many picturesque villages—of which his father was Vicar. He was sent to Jesus College, Cambridge, but ran away and enlisted as a soldier under the name of Silas Titus Cumberbatch. After being returned by his relatives to the University, he refused to settle down to routine studies and ran away a second time never to come back.

Coleridge then fraternized first with Southey and later with Wordsworth. With Southey he planned a colony in America. At Bristol, the proposed place of embarkation, they married two young milliners, who were to accompany them to the "wilds." They found it, however, more difficult to secure passage money than wives, and their dreams of the New World were never realized. The Coleridges after this lived as neighbors to Wordsworth and his sister at Alfoxden in Dorset, and the two young poets wrote *Lyrical Ballads*, to which Coleridge contributed *The Ancient Mariner*. Coleridge in the course of time found Wordsworth too fond of solitude, too opinionated, and perhaps too puritanical; nor can we imagine Wordsworth sharing Coleridge's growing taste for opiates.

Coleridge was born with a great poetic gift, which in his later years he allowed to become partially extinguished. *The Ancient Mariner* has some lyrical lines that haunt the memory, but his famous *Hymn Before Sunrise* marks the highest point of his poetic achievement. His *Biographia Literaria* is a second rate work, lacking both force and substance. There is in Coleridge's art a rare refinement, a depth of reverence, and a real humility that will ever endear him to his readers.

### KUBLA KHAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man,  
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round:  
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was forced:  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momently the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she play'd,  
Singing of Mount Abora.

Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me  
That, with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,—  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! beware  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

## LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of love,  
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay,  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,  
Had blended with the lights of eve;  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the arméd man,  
The statue of the arméd knight;  
She stood and listened to my lay  
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve!  
She loves me best whene'er I sing  
    The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song that suited well  
    That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
For well she knew I could not choose  
    But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
    The lady of the land.

I told her how he pined; and ah!  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
    Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
And she forgave me that I gazed  
    Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed the bold and lovely knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
    Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once,  
    In green and sunny glade,

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright;  
And that he knew it was a fiend,  
    This miserable knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped among a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
    The lady of the land;

And how she wept and clasped his knees,  
And how she tended him in vain—  
And ever strove to expiate  
    The scorn that crazed his brain.

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest leaves  
    A dying man he lay!

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
    Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve—  
The music and the doleful tale,  
    The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng;  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
    Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love and virgin shame;  
And like a murmur of a dream  
    I heard her breathe my name.



Her bosom heaved, she stepped aside;  
As conscious of my look she stepped—  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,  
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,  
She pressed me with a meek embrace,  
And bending back her head, looked up  
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel than see  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears; and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous bride!

#### HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star  
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause  
On thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc!  
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base  
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!  
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,  
How silently! Around thee and above,  
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,  
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,  
As with a wedge! But when I look again,  
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,  
Thy habitation from eternity!  
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,  
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,  
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,

I worshipped the Invisible alone.  
Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,  
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,  
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,  
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy;  
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,  
Into the mighty vision passing—there,  
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise  
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,  
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy. Awake,  
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!  
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!  
O, struggling with the darkness all the night,  
And visited all night by troops of stars,  
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:  
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,  
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn  
Co-herald: wake, O wake and utter praise!  
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?  
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?  
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!  
Who called you forth from night and utter death,  
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,  
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,  
Forever shattered and the same forever?  
Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,  
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?  
And who commanded (and the silence came),  
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow  
Adown enormous ravines slope amain,—

Torrents, methinks, that heard a might voice,  
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge—  
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!  
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven  
Beneath the keen, full moon? Who bade the sun  
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers  
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—  
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,  
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!  
God! Sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice!  
Ye pine groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!  
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,  
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!  
Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!  
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!  
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain storm!  
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!  
Ye signs and wonders of the elements!  
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks,  
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,  
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene  
Into the depths of clouds, that veil thy breast,—  
Thou, too, again, stupendous Mountain! Thou  
That as I raise my head awhile bowed low  
In adoration,—upward from thy base  
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,—  
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,  
To rise before me! Rise, oh, ever rise,  
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth!  
Thou kingly spirit, throned among the hills,  
Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,  
Great hierarch! Tell thou the silent sky,  
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,  
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

(1775–1864)

Walter Savage Landor was born in 1775 in Shakespeare's county of Warwickshire; but unlike Shakespeare was educated at Oxford, where he attained high scholastic honours.

His first poem entitled *Gebir* was printed in 1798, the year of *Lyrical Ballads*, which was a protest against the classic style of Pope and Dryden that Landor followed. His *Imaginary Conversations* in prose is his only work that is now remembered with the exception of some short lyrics—too short to be classed with the best work of English poets.

Landor lived for a long while in Italy, where he met the Brownings. He died in Florence in 1864. His *Rose Aylmer* is his best known piece, and Charles Lamb told its author that "he lived on it for weeks": rather scant fare but very dainty. In Mrs. Browning's letters, published by Sir Frederick Kenyon, there are many amusing references to Landor and his raging against the ways of the world. Although never popular in the sense of being widely read, he knows no peers as an epigrammatist and writer of occasional verse.

### ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptered race!  
Ah, what the form divine!  
What every virtue, every grace!  
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
May weep, but never see,  
A night of memories and sighs  
I consecrate to thee.

## READY TO DEPART

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife.  
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art:  
I warmed both hands before the fire of life;  
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

## THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel:  
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:  
O, if you felt the pain I feel!  
But O, who ever felt as I?

No longer could I doubt him true—  
All other men may use deceit:  
He always said my eyes were blue,  
And often swore my lips were sweet.

## DEATH

Death stands above me whispering low  
I know not what into my ear;  
Of his strange language all I know  
Is there not a word of fear.



## THOMAS MOORE

(1779-1852)

Ireland's one widely known poet of the past is Thomas Moore. He was born in Dublin in 1779 and died in Wiltshire in 1852. His father kept a wine-shop; and wine and song have always gone together. Moore graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, where he gained much fame as a singer of songs to his own accompaniment at the piano. He came to London in 1799 to study law but seems to have devoted his time to social evenings with England's fair ladies, to whom he wrote bewitching poems, which were rendered more irresistible by their author's pleasant voice and dexterous piano accompaniment.

In 1801 appeared *The Poetic Works of the Late Thomas Little, Esq.*, which was his own pseudonym, as he was diminutive in stature. A short while later witnessed the publication of his *Irish Melodies*, which alone have survived Time's process of elimination.

Moore for some time held an appointment at Bermuda and while there wrote a poem on his impressions of America. He met Lord Byron in London at the time of Byron's quarrel with his wife and her family and acted as his literary agent and also as the editor of his life and letters. He is blamed by many for his part in the burning of Byron's verse autobiography.

Moore, although extravagantly praised by Poe, has a thin vein of poetry mostly consisting of songs patriotic and amorous. His verse is pretty rather than poetic, and its over-sentimental strain has today gone out of fashion.

### THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

Oft in the stilly night  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Fond Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me:

The smiles, and tears  
Of boyhood's years,  
The words of love then spoken;  
The eyes that shone,  
Now dimm'd and gone,  
The cheerful hearts now broken!  
Thus in the stilly night  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Sad Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me.

When I remember all  
The friends so link'd together  
I've seen around me fall  
Like leaves in wintry weather,  
I feel like one  
Who treads alone  
Some banquet-hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled,  
Whose garlands dead,  
And all but he departed!  
Thus in the stilly night  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Sad Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me.

#### SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,  
And lovers are round her sighing;  
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,  
For her heart in his grave is lying!

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,  
Every note which he loved awaking;  
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,  
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking!

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,  
They were all that to life had entwined him;  
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,  
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,  
When they promise a glorious morrow;  
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,  
From her own loved island of sorrow!

BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING  
YOUNG CHARMS

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,  
Which I gaze on so fondly today,  
Were to change by tomorrow and fleet in my arms,  
Like fairy-gifts fading away;  
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,  
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,  
And around the dear ruin, each wish of my heart  
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,  
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,  
That the fervor and faith of a soul can be known,  
To which time will but make thee more dear;  
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,  
But as truly loves on to the close,  
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he sets,  
The same look which she turned when he rose.

## GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

(1788–1824)

Lord Byron, like Milton and Browning, was born in London. His father, a captain in the British forces, was known to his associates as "Mad Jack." His mother was a Miss Gordon of Aberdeen. Byron, by birth half a Scot, soon showed a fiery independent nature more Scotch than English. As a poet he has much in common with Burns: the Lord and the peasant are brothers under the skin. Social England of the four Georges was more hypocritical than ever before yet cursed every one who did not outwardly conform to its code.

Byron went to Harrow and Cambridge, but he disliked both. While still a boy at Harrow, he succeeded to his great-uncle's estate at Newstead Abbey and became one of the Lords of the realm. At nineteen he published his first verses, *Hours of Idleness*. The *Quarterly Review* savagely attacked the young poet, who replied with the delightful satire, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The work was highly amusing but showed more wit than wisdom. *Childe Harold* followed and made Byron famous.

In January of 1815 came his calamitous marriage to Miss Milbanke, the last woman in the world to understand a nature like Byron's. A year later she left him, taking with her their two-months-old baby girl. Byron never saw wife or child again; but the former, believing his past life to be unforgivable, thirty years later, told Mrs. Stowe some strange things about her husband, which Mrs. Stowe even more strangely insisted on publishing. There was, and still is, a wide-spread whispered charge against Byron of being too intimate with his half-sister before his marriage. Even if the charge were substantiated, it is not a sufficient reason for denying Byron's claim to be the next in stature to Shakespeare among the English poets. It can be proved, however, that the only woman he passionately loved and loved to the last minute of his life was his half-sister, Augusta.

From 1816 till his death Byron lived chiefly in Italy, where

he became associated with the Countess of Guiccioli, a charming young Italian noblewoman of sixteen, who venerated him as a kind of divinity. Forty years after his death, she wrote his life, as though he had been a model man and a model husband.

Stimulated by Italian skies and society, he wrote *Don Juan*, a satire on English society, which he left unfinished when he died at Missolonghi, fighting for the freedom of Greece.

The mountains look on Marathon,  
And Marathon looks on the sea;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;  
For, standing on the Persian's grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave.

These lines, put into the mouth of a Greek patriot, are really the expression of Byron's own heart, which was given to Greece after his own country had cast him out.

Byron's love-lyrics, while they are more classic than those of Burns, are yet not the less fervid. Compared with the work of these two geniuses, the love-lyrics of the Lake poets are as cold as the lakes of Northern England from which they take their name. Despised by the "unco guid," Byron will ever be loved by those who struggle, as he did, to free themselves and their fellows from the devil's most effective snare, cant and hypocrisy.

#### MAID OF ATHENS

Maid of Athens, ere we part,  
Give, O give me back my heart!  
Or, since that has left my breast,  
Keep it now, and take the rest!  
Hear my vow before I go,  
Ζώη μου σάς ἀγαπῶ

By those tresses unconfined,  
Woody by each Aegean wind;  
By those lids whose jetty fringe  
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;  
By those wild eyes like the roe,  
Ζώη μου σάς ἀγαπῶ



By that lip I long to taste;  
By that zone-encircled waist;  
By all the token-flowers that tell  
What words can never speak so well;  
By love's alternate joy and woe,  
*Ζώη μου σάς ἀγαπῶ*

Maid of Athens! I am gone.  
Think of me, sweet! when alone.  
Though I fly to Istambol ,  
Athens holds my heart and soul:  
Can I cease to love thee? No!  
*Ζώη μου σάς ἀγαπῶ*

#### SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

She walks in beauty like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;  
Thus mellowed to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impaired the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face;  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent.

## STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

Though the day of my destiny's over,  
And the star of my fate hath declined,  
Thy soft heart refused to discover  
The faults which so many could find;  
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
It shrunk not to share it with me,  
And the love which my spirit hath painted  
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
The last smile which answers to mine,  
I do not believe it beguiling  
Because it reminds me of thine;  
And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
As the breasts I believed in with me,  
If their billows excite an emotion,  
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered  
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
Though I feel that my soul is delivered  
To pain,—it shall not be its slave.  
There is many a pang to pursue me:  
They may crush, but they shall not condemn—  
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—  
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake,—  
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
Though parted, it was not to fly,  
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,  
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,  
Nor the war of the many with one—  
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:  
And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
And more than I once could foresee,  
I have found that whatever it lost me,  
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,  
This much I at least may recall,  
It hath taught me that what I most cherished  
Deserved to be dearest of all;  
In the desert a fountain is springing,  
In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
And a bird in the solitude singing,  
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

#### WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted  
In silence and tears,  
Half broken-hearted  
To sever for years,  
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
Colder thy kiss;  
Truly that hour foretold  
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
Sunk chill on my brow—  
It felt like the warning  
Of what I feel now.  
Thy vows are all broken,  
And light is thy fame:  
I hear thy name spoken,  
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
A knell to mine ear;  
A shudder comes o'er me—  
Why wert thou so dear?  
They know not I knew thee,  
Who knew thee too well:  
Long, long shall I rue thee,  
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—  
In silence I grieve  
That thy heart could forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet thee?  
With silence and tears.

## THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

### *Sonnet on Chillon*

Eternal Spirit of the chainless mind!  
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art,  
For there thy habitation is the heart—  
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;  
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—  
To fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom—  
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,  
And freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.  
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,  
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod  
Until his very steps have left a trace,  
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!  
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

## I

My hair is grey, but not with years,  
Nor grew it white  
In a single night,  
As men's have grown from sudden fears;  
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,  
But rusted with a vile repose;  
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,  
And mine has been the fate of those  
To whom the goodly earth and air  
Are banned and barred—forbidden fare.  
But this was for my father's faith  
I suffered chains and courted death.  
That father perished at the stake  
For tenets he would not forsake;  
And for the same his lineal race  
In darkness found a dwelling-place.  
We were seven, who now are one—  
Six in youth, and one in age,  
Finished as they had begun,  
Proud of Persecution's rage;  
One in fire and two in field  
Their belief with blood have sealed;  
Dying as their father died  
For the God their foes denied.  
Three were in a dungeon cast,  
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

## II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mold,  
In Chillón's dungeons deep and old;  
There are seven columns massy and gray,  
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,  
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,  
And through the crevice and the cleft  
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;



Creeping o'er the floor so damp,  
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:  
And in each pillar there is a ring  
And in each ring there is a chain;  
That iron is a cankering thing,  
For in these limbs its teeth remain,  
With marks that will not wear away  
Till I have done with this new day,  
Which now is painful to these eyes,  
Which have not seen the sun so rise  
For years—I cannot count them o'er,  
I lost their long and heavy score  
When my last brother drooped and died,  
And I lay living by his side.

### III

They chained us each to a column of stone  
And we were three—yet each alone.  
We could not move a single pace;  
We could not see each other's face,  
But with that pale and livid light  
That made us strangers in our sight;  
And thus together, yet apart  
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart;  
'Twas still some solace in the dearth  
Of the pure elements of earth,  
To hearken to each other's speech,  
And each turn comforter to each  
With some new hope, or legend old,  
Or song heroically bold;  
But even these at length grew cold.  
Our voices took a dreary tone,  
An echo of the dungeon-stone,  
A grating sound—not full and free,  
As they of yore were wont to be;  
It might be fancy—but to me  
They never sounded like our own.

#### IV

I was the eldest of the three;  
And to uphold and cheer the rest  
I ought to do, and did, my best—  
And each did well in his degree.  
The youngest whom my father loved  
Because our mother's brow was given  
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven,  
For him my soul was sorely moved;  
And truly might it be distressed  
For he was beautiful as day  
(When day was beautiful to me  
As to young eagles, being free),  
A polar day, which will not see  
A sunset till its summer's gone,  
Its sleepless summer of long light,  
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:  
And thus he was as pure and bright,  
And in his natural spirit gay,  
With tears for naught but others' ills;  
And then they flowed like mountain-rills,  
Unless he could assuage the woe  
Which he abhorred to view below.

#### V

The other was as pure of mind,  
But formed to combat with his kind.  
Strong in his frame and of a mood  
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood  
And perished in the foremost rank  
With joy; but not in chains to pine,  
His spirit withered with their clank;  
I saw it silently decline—  
And so perchance in sooth did mine:  
And yet I forced it on to cheer  
Those relics of a home so dear.

He was a hunter of the hills,  
Had followed there the deer and wolf;  
To whom this dungeon was a gulf,  
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

## VI

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's walls,  
A thousand feet in depth below,  
Its massy waters meet and flow—  
Thus much the fathom line was sent  
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,  
Which round about the wave enthralls;  
A double dungeon wall and wave  
Have made, and like a living grave  
Below the surface of the lake  
The dark vault lies wherein we lay.  
We heard it ripple night and day;  
Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;  
And I felt the winter's spray  
Wash through the bars when winds were high,  
And wanton in the happy sky;  
And then the very rock hath rocked,  
And I have felt it shake, unshocked,  
Because I could have smiled to see  
The death that would have set me free.

## VII

I said my nearer brother pined;  
I said his mighty heart declined.  
He loathed and put away his food;  
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,  
For we were used to hunter's fare,  
And for the like had little care.  
The milk drawn from the mountain-goat  
Was changed for water from the moat;  
Our bread was such as captives' tears  
Have moistened many a thousand years,  
Since man first pent his fellow-men

Like brutes within an iron den.  
But what were these to us or him?  
These wasted not his heart or limb;  
My brother's soul was of that mould  
Which in a palace had grown cold  
Had his free breathing been denied  
The range of the steep mountain's side.  
But why delay the truth? He died.  
I saw, and could not hold his head,  
Nor reach his dying hand, nor dead,  
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain  
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
He died, and they unlocked his chain  
And scooped for him a shallow grave  
E'en from the cold earth of our cave.  
I begged them as a boon to lay  
His corpse in dust whereon the day  
Might shine. It was a foolish thought,  
But then within my brain it wrought  
That even in death his free-born breast  
In such a dungeon could not rest.  
I might have spared my idle prayer.  
They coldly laughed and laid him there,  
The flat and turfless earth above  
The being we so much did love.  
His empty chain above it leant,  
Such murder's fitting monument!

## VIII

But he, the favorite and the flower,  
Most cherished since his natal hour,  
His mother's image in fair face,  
The infant love of all his race,  
His martyred father's dearest thought,  
My latest care,—for whom I sought  
To hoard my life, that his might be  
Less wretched now, and one day free,—

He, too, who yet had held untired  
A spirit natural or inspired,  
He, too, was struck, and day by day  
Was withered on the stalk away,  
O God! It is a fearful thing  
To see the human soul take wing  
In any shape, in any mood;  
I've seen it rushing forth in blood;  
I've seen it on the breaking ocean  
Strive with a swoln, convulsive motion;  
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
Of sin delirious with its dread;  
But these were horrors, this was woe  
Unmixed with such, but sure and slow.  
He faded, and so calm and meek  
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,  
So tearless, yet so tender, kind  
And grieved for those he left behind;  
With all the while a cheek whose bloom  
Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
Whose tints as gently sunk away  
As a departing rainbow's ray,  
An eye of most transparent light  
That almost made the dungeon bright,  
And not a word of murmur, not  
A groan o'er his untimely lot;  
A little talk of better days,  
A little hope my own to raise;  
For I was sunk in silence, lost  
In this last loss, of all the most;  
And then the sighs he would suppress  
Of fainting Nature's feebleness,  
More slowly drawn, grew less and less.  
I listened, but I could not hear—  
I called, for I was wild with fear;  
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread  
Would not be thus admonished;



I called, and thought I heard a sound—  
I burst my chain with one strong bound,  
And rushed to him; I found him not,  
I only stirred in this black spot,  
I only lived—I only drew  
The accursed breath of dungeon dew;  
The last, the sole, the dearest link  
Between me and the eternal brink,  
Which bound me to my failing race,  
Was broken in this fatal place.  
One on the earth, and one beneath,  
My brothers, both had ceased to breathe.  
I took that hand which lay so still—  
Alas! my own was full as chill;  
I had not strength to stir or strive,  
But felt that I was still alive—  
A frantic feeling, when we know  
That what we love shall ne'er be so.  
I know not why  
I could not die,  
I had no earthly hope but faith,  
And that forbade a selfish death.

## IX

What next befell me then and there  
I know not well, I never knew.  
First came the loss of light and air,  
And then of darkness too.  
I had no thought, no feeling—none:  
Among the stones I stood a stone;  
And was scarce conscious what I wist,  
As shrubless crags within the mist;  
For all was blank and bleak and gray;  
It was not night—it was not day.  
It was not even the dungeon light,  
So hateful to my heavy sight,

But vacancy absorbing space,  
And fixedness, without a place;  
There were no stars, no earth, no time,  
No check, no change, no good, no crime;  
But silence and a stirless breath,  
Which neither was of life nor death;  
A sea of stagnant idleness,  
Blind, boundless, mute and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain—  
It was the carol of a bird;  
It ceased and then it came again,  
The sweetest song ear ever heard;  
And mine was thankful till my eyes  
Ran over with the glad surprise,  
And they that moment could not see  
I was the mate of misery;  
But then by dull degrees came back  
My senses to their wonted track:  
I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
Close slowly round me as before;  
I saw the glimmer of the sun  
Creeping as it before had done;  
But through the crevice where it came  
That bird was perched as fond and tame,  
And tamer than upon the tree—  
A lovely bird with azure wings,  
And song that said a thousand things,  
And seemed to say them all for me!  
I never saw its like before,  
I ne'er shall see its likeness more.  
It seemed like me to want a mate,  
But was not half so desolate;  
And it was come to love me when  
None lived to love me so again,

And, cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
Had brought me back to feel and think.  
I knew not if it late were free,  
Or broke its cage to perch on mine;  
But knowing well captivity,  
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!  
Or if it were in wingéd guise,  
A visitant from Paradise.  
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while  
Which made me both to weep and smile;  
I sometimes deemed that it might be  
My brother's soul come down to me.  
But then at last away it flew,  
And then 'twas mortal well I knew,  
For he would never thus have flown  
And left me twice so doubly lone.  
Lone as the corpse within its shroud,  
Lone as a solitary cloud,  
A single cloud on a sunny day,  
While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
A frown upon the atmosphere,  
That hath no business to appear  
When skies are blue and earth is gay.

## XI

A kind of change came in my fate—  
My keepers grew compassionate.  
I know not what had made them so;  
They were inured to sights of woe;  
But so it was—my broken chain  
With links unfastened did remain;  
And it was liberty to stride  
Along my cell from side to side  
And up and down and then athwart  
And tread it over every part;  
And round the pillars one by one,  
Returning where my walk begun,

Avoiding only as I trod  
My brothers' graves without a sod;  
For if I thought with heedless tread  
My step profaned their lowly bed,  
My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
And my crushed heart felt blind and sick.

## XII

I made a footing in the wall:  
It was not therefrom to escape,  
For I had buried one and all  
Who loved me in a human shape;  
And the whole earth would henceforth be  
A wider prison unto me.  
No child, no sire, no kin had I,  
No partners in my misery.  
I thought of this and I was glad,  
For thought of them had made me mad;  
But I was curious to ascend  
To my barred windows and to bend  
Once more upon the mountains high  
The quiet of a loving eye.

## XIII

I saw them, and they were the same;  
They were not changed like me in frame;  
I saw their thousand years of snow  
On high, their wide, long lake below,  
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow.  
I heard the torrents leap and gush  
O'er channeled rock and broken bush;  
I saw the white-walled distant town,  
And whiter sails go skimming down;  
And then there was a little isle,  
Which in my very face did smile,  
The only one in view,

A small green isle, it seemed no more,  
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor;  
But in it there were three tall trees,  
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,  
And by it there were waters flowing,  
And on it there were young flowers growing  
Of gentle breath and hue.  
The fish swam by the castle wall  
And they seemed joyous, each and all;  
The eagle rode the rising blast,  
Methought he never flew so fast  
As then to me he seemed to fly.  
And then new tears came in my eye,  
And I felt troubled, and would fain  
I had not left my recent chain.  
And when I did descend again,  
The darkness of my dim abode  
Fell on me as a heavy load.  
It was as is a new-dug grave,  
Closing o'er one we sought to save;  
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,  
Had almost need of such a rest.

#### XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,  
I kept no count, I took no note,  
I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
And clear them of their dreary mote;  
At last men came to set me free,  
I asked not why, and recked not where;  
It was at length the same to me  
Fettered or fetterless to be;  
I learned to love despair.  
And thus when they appeared at last,  
And all my bonds aside were cast,  
These heavy walls to me had grown  
A hermitage—and all my own!



And half I felt as they were come  
To tear me from a second home.  
With spiders I had friendship made,  
And watched them in their sullen trade;  
Had seen the mice by moonlight play;  
And why should I feel less than they?  
We were all inmates of one place,  
And I, the monarch of each race,  
Had powers to kill; yet strange to tell,  
In quiet we had learned to dwell.  
My very chains and I grew friends,  
So much a long communion tends  
To make us what we are;—even I  
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY  
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,  
Since others it hath ceased to move;  
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,  
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;  
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys  
Is lone as some volcanic isle;  
No torch is kindled at its blaze—  
A funeral pile!

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,  
The exalted portion of the pain  
And power of love, I cannot share,  
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—  
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*  
Where glory decks the hero's bier,  
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,  
Glory and Greece around me see!  
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,  
Was not more free.

Awake! (Not Greece—She is awake!)  
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*  
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,  
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,  
Unworthy manhood! Unto thee  
Indifferent should the smile or frown,  
Of beauty be.

If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why live?*  
The land of honourable death  
Is here; up to the field, and give  
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—  
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;  
Then look around, and choose thy ground,  
And take thy rest.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(1792-1822)

Shelley is a lyric poet and owes his place in English literature to his power in putting his imaginings into musical words. Matthew Arnold described him as, "a beautiful ineffectual angel, beating the luminous void with his wings."

He was born at Field Place near Horsham in Sussex in 1792, the eldest son of Sir Thomas Shelley, Baronet. After preparing at Eton, he entered Oxford; but he was expelled from the latter for printing a tract, *The Necessity of Atheism*. His father cut him off with an allowance, and at nineteen he married the daughter of an inn-keeper.

Shelley soon deserted her and their two children and went to France with Mary Godwin, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a philosopher, from whom she inherited lax views on many subjects besides marriage. After this he wrote to his wife and asked her to join Mary and himself on the Continent. She, however, was made so unhappy by his desertion, that like Ophelia she drowned herself in the Serpentine in Hyde Park. This tragedy occurred in 1816, and Shelley went to Switzerland to escape English calumny, and while there he met Lord Byron.

Byron lived in the world of reality; Shelley in the world of dreams. Byron knew there was a devil; Shelley believed that the devil was merely a fiction of the imagination on the part of man. He impersonated the sun and the moon and the clouds and made them into radiant beings, who, like himself, sang lyrical and fairy-like songs. In his thirty years of troubled life, he always saw things with the eyes of an inspired child and never quite grew to man's estate.

It was Shelley's misfortune not to have a trace of humor in his whole composition. His longer works such as *Prometheus Unbound* and his drama, *The Cenci*, which are spoiled by bad philosophy, have passed into oblivion. *Adonais*, his elegy on Keats, is remembered for its concluding stanzas. His lasting

work is found in his lyrics of which the *Ode to a Skylark* is the greatest and is perhaps worth more than anything else Shelley ever wrote.

### THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
From the seas and the streams;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In the noon-day dreams;  
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast;  
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.  
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,  
Lightning, my pilot, sits;  
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
It struggles and howls in fits;  
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that move  
In the depths of the purple sea;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,  
The spirit he loves remains;  
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,  
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead:  
As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings;  
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath  
Its ardours of rest and of love,  
And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
From the depth of heaven above,  
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,  
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbéd maiden with white fire laden,  
Whom mortals call the moon,  
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,  
By the midnight breezes strewn;  
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,  
Which only the angels hear,  
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,  
The stars peep behind her and peer;  
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
Like a swarm of golden bees,  
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,  
Till the calm rivers, lakes and seas,  
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,  
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,  
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;  
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,  
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.  
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,  
Over a torrent sea,  
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,  
The mountains its columns be.



The triumphal arch through which I march  
With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,  
Is the million-coloured bow;  
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,  
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,  
And the nursling of the sky;  
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;  
I change, but I cannot die.  
For after the rain when, with never a stain,  
The pavilion of heaven is bare,  
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams,  
Build up the blue dome of air,  
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,  
And out of the caverns of rain,  
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,  
I arise and unbuild it again.

#### TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!  
Bird thou never wert,  
That from heaven, or near it,  
Pourest thy full heart  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.  
Higher still and higher  
From the earth thou springest  
Like a cloud of fire;  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.  
In the golden lightning  
Of the sunken sun,  
O'er which clouds are brightening,  
Thou dost float and run;  
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even  
Melts around thy flight;  
Like a star of heaven,  
In the broad day-light  
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows  
Of that silver sphere,  
Whose intense lamp narrows  
In the white dawn clear,  
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air  
With thy voice is loud,  
As, when night is bare,  
From one lonely cloud  
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not:  
What is most like thee?  
From rainbow-clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see,  
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering unbeholden  
Its aërial hue  
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the  
view:

Like a rose embowered  
In its own green leaves,  
By warm winds deflowered,  
Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingéd  
thieves.

Sound of vernal showers  
On the twinkling grass,  
Rain-awakened flowers,  
All that ever was  
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass:

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
What sweet thoughts are thine:  
I have never heard,  
Praise of love or wine  
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
Or triumphal chaunt,  
Matched with thine would be all  
But an empty vaunt,  
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains  
Of thy happy strain?  
What fields, or waves, or mountains?  
What shapes of sky or plain?  
What love of thine own kind, what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance  
Languor cannot be:  
Shadow of annoyance  
Never came near thee:  
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn  
Hate, and pride, and fear;  
If we were things born  
Not to shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found,  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow,  
The world would listen then as I am listening now.

## THE INDIAN SERENADE

I arise from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright.  
I arise from dreams of thee,  
And a spirit in my feet  
Hath led me—who knows how?  
To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream;  
The champak odors fail  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;  
The nightingale's complaint,  
It dies upon her heart,  
As I must die on thine,  
O belovéd as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!  
I die, I faint, I fail!  
Let thy love in kisses rain  
On my lips and eyelids pale.  
My cheek is cold and white, alas!  
My heart beats loud and fast:  
O press it close to thine again,  
Where it will break at last!

## ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

One word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdain'd  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And pity from thee more dear  
Than that from another.



I can give not what men call love;  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the heavens reject not:  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow?

#### MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

Music, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory;  
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
Are heaped for the belovéd's bed;  
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,  
Love itself shall slumber on.

## FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

(1794–1835)

Mrs. Hemans was born in Liverpool on the banks of the River Mersey. Most of her early life was spent in Wales where her father went to live by the sea after his retirement from business. Her marriage with Captain Hemans at eighteen was not a success. After she had borne him five sons, her husband deserted her to live in Italy, preferring residence in a foreign country to a home with a charming and gifted wife.

Mrs. Hemans wrote poems, some of which were set to music by her talented sister. Most of her verse deals with home affections, and all of it is simple and spiritual. There is no line of hers that has not a tendency to bless and enrich human life and human relationships; and her influence on the childhood of thousands of readers has been uplifting and ennobling.

There is a certain amount of sameness in her poetry as a whole that militates against its fame; but her poem, *The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers*, and her *Graves of a Household* are writ deep in the consciousness of both the Old and the New World. Wordsworth paid her a touching tribute:

Mourn rather for that holy spirit,  
Pure as the spring, as ocean deep,  
For her who ere her summer faded  
Hath sunk into a breathless sleep.

### THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD

They grew in beauty, side by side,  
They fill'd one home with glee;—  
Their graves are sever'd far and wide,  
By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night  
O'er each fair sleeping brow;  
She had each folded flower in sight—  
Where are those dreamers now?

One midst the forest of the west,  
By a dark stream is laid—  
The Indian knows his place of rest,  
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one—  
He lies where pearls lie deep;  
*He* was the loved of all, yet none  
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are drest,  
Above the noble slain:  
He wrapt his colors round his breast  
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one—o'er *her* the myrtle showers  
Its leaves, by soft winds fann'd;  
She faded 'midst Italian flowers—  
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest, who play'd  
Beneath the same green tree;  
Whose voices mingled as they pray'd  
Around one parent knee!

They that with smiles lit up the hall,  
And cheer'd with song the hearth—  
Alas! for love, if *thou* wert all,  
And nought beyond, O earth!

#### DIRGE

Calm on the bosom of thy God,  
Fair spirit, rest thee now!  
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,  
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!  
Soul, to its place on high!  
They that have been seen thy look in death,  
No more may fear to die.

#### THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

The breaking waves dash'd high  
On a stern and rock-bound coast,  
And the woods against a stormy sky  
Their giant branches toss'd;

And the heavy night hung dark,  
The hills and waters o'er,  
When a band of exiles moor'd their bark  
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,  
They, the true-hearted, came;  
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,  
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,  
In silence and in fear;—  
They shook the depths of the desert gloom  
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,  
And the stars heard and the sea:  
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang  
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soar'd  
From his nest by the white wave's foam;  
And the rocking pines of the forest roar'd—  
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair  
Amidst that pilgrim band:—  
Why had *they* come to wither there,  
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,  
Lit by her deep love's truth;  
There was manhood's brow serenely high,  
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?  
Bright jewels of the mine?  
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—  
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,  
The soil where first they trod.  
They have left unstained, what there they found—  
Freedom to worship God.



## WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

(1794-1878)

William Cullen Bryant was born in Hampshire, Massachusetts, in 1794. He spent a single year at Williams College, and apart from that his teachers were the sky, and the fields, and the trees, and his own heart. He studied for the law, but forsook it for literary pursuits and in 1826 became editor of the New York *Evening Post*. His work thereafter lay in journalism in the vast eastern city for more than fifty years till his death in 1878. He writes of the surging tides of humanity that greeted his eyes day after day on the New York streets:

Each where his tasks or pleasures call  
They pass, and heed each other not;  
There is Who heeds, Who holds them all  
In His large love and boundless thought.

Bryant is a close student of Wordsworth and has caught both the charm and monotony of his master. Like Wordsworth he is a profoundly moral writer and has a firm faith in a Divine Providence. His verse moves with a stateliness and melodiousness of its own and keeps a higher level than that of the author of *The Excursion*. His poem *To a Waterfowl* is in a non-Wordsworthian metre and has a rare beauty of rhythm and phrasing leading to a natural and poetic climax.

Bryant's lines *To the Fringed Gentian* show his love for "the meanest flower that blows," which can bring to him as to Wordsworth—

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The love and interest that Byron and Burns gave their fellow-men, Wordsworth and Bryant give to the works of Nature.

## THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of nature holds  
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
A various language: for his gayer hours  
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile  
And eloquence of beauty; and she glides  
Into his darker musings with a mild  
And healing sympathy, that steals away  
Their sharpness ere he is aware. When thoughts  
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight  
Over thy spirit, and sad images  
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,  
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,  
Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart,—  
Go forth, under the open sky, and list  
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—  
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—  
Comes a still voice: Yet a few days, and thee  
The all-beholding son shall see no more  
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,  
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears,  
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist  
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim  
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,  
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up  
Thine individual being, shalt thou go  
To mix forever with the elements,  
To be a brother to the insensible rock,  
And, to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain  
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak  
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place  
Shalt thou retire alone—nor couldst thou wish  
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down  
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,  
The powerful of the earth, the wise, the good,

Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,  
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,  
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales  
Stretching in pensive quietness between;  
The venerable woods; rivers that move  
In majesty, and the complaining brooks  
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,  
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—  
Are but the solemn decorations all  
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,  
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,  
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,  
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes  
That slumber in its bosom. Take the wings  
Of morning; pierce the Barcan wilderness,  
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods  
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound  
Save his own dashings,—yet the dead are there;  
And millions in those solitudes, since first  
The flight of years began, have laid them down  
In their last sleep,—the dead reign there alone.  
So shalt thou rest; and what if thou withdraw  
In silence from the living, and no friend  
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe  
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh  
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care  
Plod on, and each one, as before, will chase  
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave  
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come  
And make their bed with thee. As the long train  
Of ages glides away, the sons of men—  
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes  
In the full strength of years, matron, and maid,  
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man—  
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side  
By those who in their turn shall follow them.

So live that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan, which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

#### TO A WATER-FOWL

Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,  
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,  
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
Of weedy lake or marge of river wide,  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—  
The desert and illimitable air,  
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,  
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,  
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend  
    Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone; the abyss of heaven  
Hath swallowed up thy form, yet on my heart  
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,  
    And shall not soon depart:

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,  
In the long way that I must tread alone  
    Will lead my steps aright.

#### TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Thou blossom, bright with autumn dew,  
And coloured with the heaven's own blue,  
That openest when the quiet light  
Succeeds the keen and frosty night;

Thou comest not when violets lean  
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen;  
Or columbines, in purple dressed,  
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late, and com'st alone,  
When woods are bare and birds are flown,  
And frosts and shortening days portend  
The aged Year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye  
Look through its fringes to the sky,  
Blue, blue as if the sky let fall  
A flower from its cerulean wall.



I would that thus, when I shall see  
The hour of death draw near to me,  
Hope, blossoming within my heart,  
May look to heaven as I depart.

#### THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,  
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, the meadows brown  
and sear.

Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves lie  
dead;

They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread.  
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs  
the jay,

And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the  
gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately  
sprang and stood

In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?  
Alas! they are all in their graves; the gentle race of  
flowers

Are lying in their lowly beds with the fair and good of  
ours.

The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November  
rain

Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,  
And the brier-rose and the orchid died amid the summer  
glow;

But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,  
And the yellow sunflower by the brook in autumn beauty  
stood,

Till fell the frost from the cold clear heaven, as falls the  
plague on men,

And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland,  
glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such  
days will come,  
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter  
home;  
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the  
trees are still,  
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,  
The south-wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance  
late he bore,  
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream  
no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty died,  
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my  
side.  
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forests cast  
the leaf,  
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so  
brief;  
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of  
ours,  
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

## JOHN KEATS

(1795–1821)

John Keats was born in London in 1795. His father was master of the *Swan and Hoop Livery Stables*, No. 28, Pavement, Moorfields. In 1810 both his father and mother died, and he was apprenticed to a surgeon. His mind, however, turned more and more to poetry, and his soul was fired by Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the translation of George Chapman, the Elizabethan dramatist:

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.

Keats' mind dwelt on Greek themes more than others, and Greek names had for him a supreme fascination. *Endymion*, *Hyperion*, and the famous *Ode to a Grecian Urn* are all thus influenced. His *Ode to Autumn* and his *Ode to a Nightingale* are finished examples of classic form in verse; of classic thought; and (alas!) of classic pessimism. Even his *Last Sonnet* fails to rise above the philosophy of Catullus in his lines to Lesbia.

Keats died in Rome at the early age of twenty-six. He was attended to the last moment of consciousness by his devoted friend Severn. His epitaph, "Here lies one whose fame was writ in water," was chosen by himself.

Keats' poetry lives by its beauty of form and the majestic music of its finer lines. His *Ode to a Nightingale* is really his swan song and should take the place of his *Last Sonnet*. Especially haunting is the cry:

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy!

Having no hope for any future life, Keats feels with Catullus :

*Soles occidere et redire possunt ;  
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux  
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.\**

\* The sun can set and rise again ;  
But we, when our brief life doth fade,  
Sleep prisoned in eternal shade.

### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thy happiness,  
That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been  
Cooled a long age in the deep delvéd earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !  
O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stainéd mouth ;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs;  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:  
Already with thee! tender is the night,  
And haply the queen-moon is on her throne,  
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;  
But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
But in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month endows.  
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;  
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;  
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;  
And mid-May's eldest child,  
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time  
I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
Called him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,  
To take into the air my quiet breath;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy!  
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
To thy high requiem become a sod.



Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
The same that ofttimes hath  
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!  
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.  
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
Up the hillside; and now 'tis buried deep  
In the next valley-glades:  
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
Fled is that music: do I wake or sleep?

#### LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

“O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?  
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

“O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

“I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever-dew,  
And on thy cheek a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.”

“I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery’s child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

“I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She look’d at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

“I set her on my pacing steed  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery’s song.

“She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild and manna-dew,  
And sure in language strange she said  
‘I love thee true.’

“She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept and sigh’d full sore;  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

“And there she lulléd me asleep,  
And there I dream’d—Ah! woe betide!  
The latest dream I ever dream’d  
On the cold hill’s side.

“I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:  
They cried—‘La belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!’

“I saw their starved lips in the gloam  
With horrid warning gapéd wide,  
And I awoke and found me here  
On the cold hill’s side.

“And this is why I sojourn here  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.”

#### LAST SONNET

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—  
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,  
And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priestlike task  
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors:—  
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast,  
To feel forever its soft fall and swell,  
Awake forever in a sweet unrest;  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

## THOMAS HOOD

(1798–1845)

Thomas Hood was a Londoner and a humanitarian. His poetry has inwoven through it chords of kindness and humour. When he was twenty-seven, he published his first volume, *Whims and Oddities*. His next poetic effort was called *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*. In 1831 he unsuccessfully attempted the novel with *Tylney Hall*, and seven years later started the publication of *Hood's Own*. This was changed in 1844 to *Hood's Magazine* and contained some of his best work. Hood died in the following year writing for his magazine to the last.

His *Bridge of Sighs* is an appeal from man to God in the verdict of society on one of this world's unfortunates. His *Song of the Shirt* called attention to the underfed underpaid millions of London's poor. Like Mrs. Browning in her *Cry of the Children*, Hood used his gift of poetry to arouse the national conscience.

In his *Fair Ines* we have a love-poem with humorous passages and anti-climaxes—a rare combination. His verse has an ease of movement comparable with Cowper's diverting ballad of *John Gilpin*. Hood has the poet's gift of fancy in full measure, and his delightful wit is never long dormant. In his poem, *A Retrospective Review*, he can even smile at his own grief:

My football's laid upon the shelf;  
I am a shuttle-cock myself,  
The world knocks to and fro;  
My archery is all unlearned,  
And grief against myself has turned  
My arrows and my bow.

## I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I remember, I remember  
The house where I was born,  
The little window where the sun  
Came peeping in at morn;  
He never came a wink too soon,  
Nor brought too long a day,  
But now I often wish the night  
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember  
The roses, red and white,  
The violets, and the lily-cups,  
Those flowers made of light!  
The lilacs, where the robin built,  
And where my brother set  
The laburnum on his birthday,—  
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember  
Where I was used to swing,  
And thought the air must rush as fresh  
To swallows on the wing;  
My spirit flew in feathers then,  
That is so heavy now,  
And summer pools could hardly cool  
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember  
The fir-trees dark and high;  
I used to think their slender tops  
Were close against the sky:  
It was a childish ignorance,  
But now 'tis little joy  
To know I'm farther off from heaven  
Than when I was a boy.



## FAIR INES

O saw ye not fair Ines?  
She's gone into the West,  
To dazzle when the sun is down,  
And rob the world of rest:  
She took our daylight with her,  
The smiles that we love best,  
With morning blushes on her cheek,  
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,  
Before the fall of night,  
For fear the moon should shine alone,  
And stars unrivalled bright;  
And blessed will the lover be  
That walks beneath their light,  
And breathes the love against thy cheek  
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,  
That gallant cavalier,  
Who rode so gaily by thy side,  
And whisper'd thee so near!  
Were there no bonny dames at home,  
Or no true lovers here,  
That he should cross the seas to win  
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,  
Descend along the shore  
With bands of noble gentlemen,  
And banners waved before;  
And gentle youth and maidens gay,  
And snowy plumes they wore;—  
It would have been a beauteous dream,—  
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,  
She went away with song,  
With music waiting on her steps,  
And shoutings of the throng;  
But some were sad and felt no mirth,  
But only music's wrong,  
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,  
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,  
That vessel never bore  
So fair a lady on its deck,  
Nor danced so light before,—  
Alas, for pleasure on the sea,  
And sorrow on the shore!  
The smile that blest one lover's heart  
Has broken many more!

#### THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more Unfortunate,  
Weary of breath,  
Rashly importunate,  
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,  
Lift her with care;  
Fashion'd so slenderly,  
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments  
Clinging like cerements;  
Whilst the wave constantly  
Drips from her clothing;  
Take her up instantly,  
Loving, not loathing.—

Touch her not scornfully;  
Think of her mournfully,  
Gently and humanly;  
Not of the stains of her,  
All that remains of her,  
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny  
Into her mutiny  
Rash and undutiful:  
Past all dishonour,  
Death has left on her  
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,  
One of Eve's family—  
Wipe those poor lips of hers  
Oozing so clamily.

Loop up her tresses  
Escaped from the comb,  
Her fair auburn tresses;  
While wonderment guesses  
Where was her home?

Who was her father?  
Who was her mother?  
Had she a sister?  
Had she a brother?  
Or was there a dearer one  
Still, and a nearer one  
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity  
Of Christian charity  
Under the sun!  
Oh! it was pitiful!  
Near a whole city full,  
Home had she none.

Sisterly, brotherly,  
Fatherly, motherly  
Feelings had changed:  
Love, by harsh evidence,  
Thrown from its eminence,—  
Even God's Providence  
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver  
So far in the river,  
With many a light  
From window and casement,  
From garret to basement,  
She stood, with amazement,  
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March  
Made her tremble and shiver:  
But not the dark arch,  
Or the black flowing river:  
Mad from life's history  
Glad to death's mystery  
Swift to be hurl'd—  
Any where, any where  
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,  
No matter how coldly  
The rough river ran,—  
Over the brink of it;—  
Picture it—think of it,  
Dissolute man!  
Lave in it, drink of it,  
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,  
Lift her with care;  
Fashion'd so slenderly,  
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly  
Stiffen too rigidly,  
Decently,—kindly,—  
Smooth and compose them;  
And her eyes, close them,  
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring  
Through muddy impurity,  
As when with the daring  
Last look of despairing  
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,  
Spurr'd by contumely,  
Cold inhumanity,  
Burning insanity,  
Into her rest.—  
Cross her hands humbly  
As if praying dumbly,  
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,  
Her evil behavior,  
And leaving, with meekness,  
Her sins to her Saviour!

#### SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,  
With eyelids heavy and red,  
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,  
Plying her needle and thread,—  
Stitch! stitch! stitch!  
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,  
And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch,  
She sang the "Song of the Shirt."



“Work! work! work!

While the cock is crowing aloof!

And work—work—work,

Till the stars shine through the roof!

It's oh! to be a slave

Along with the barbarous Turk,

Where woman has never a soul to save,

If this is Christian work!

“Work—work—work—

Till the brain begins to swim,

Work—work—work—

Till the eyes are heavy and dim!

Seam, and gusset, and band,

Band, and gusset, and seam,

Till over the buttons I fall asleep,

And sew them on in a dream!

“Oh! men, with sisters dear!

Oh! men, with mothers and wives!

It is not linen you're wearing out,

But human creatures' lives!

Stitch—stitch—stitch,

In poverty, hunger and dirt,

Sewing at once, with a double thread,

A shroud as well as a shirt.

“But why do I talk of Death,

That phantom of grisly bone?

I hardly fear his terrible shape,

It seems so like my own—

It seems so like my own,

Because of the fasts I keep,

Oh God! that bread should be so dear,

And flesh and blood so cheap!

“Work—work—work!  
My labor never flags;  
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,  
A crust of bread,—and rags,—  
That shatter’d roof—and this naked floor—  
A table—a broken chair—  
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank  
For sometimes falling there!

“Work—work—work!  
From weary chime to chime!  
Work—work—work,  
As prisoners work for crime!  
Band, and gusset, and seam,  
Seam, and gusset, and band,  
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb’d,  
As well as the weary hand.

“Work—work—work!  
In the dull December light,  
And work—work—work,  
When the weather is warm and bright—  
While underneath the eaves  
The brooding swallows cling,  
As if to show me their sunny backs  
And twit me with the Spring.

“Oh! but to breathe the breath  
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—  
With the sky above my head,  
And the grass beneath my feet,  
For only one short hour  
To feel as I used to feel,  
Before I knew the woes of want,  
And the walk that costs a meal!

“Oh! but for one short hour!  
A respite however brief!  
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,  
But only time for Grief!  
A little weeping would ease my heart,  
But in their briny bed  
My tears must stop, for every drop  
Hinders needle and thread!”

With fingers weary and worn,  
With eyelids heavy and red,  
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,  
Plying her needle and thread—  
Stitch! stitch! stitch!  
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,  
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,  
Would that its tone could reach the rich!  
She sang this “Song of the Shirt!”

## EDWARD COATE PINKNEY

(1802-1828)

Edward Coate Pinkney was born in London in 1802, the son of William Pinkney, American ambassador to Great Britain. He served for eight years in the American Navy, from 1816 till 1824, when he resigned in favor of a law practice in Baltimore. In spite of this, his real interest proved to be in poetry, and the next year he published a short volume of poems, which contained among its lyrics the immortal love-song entitled *A Health*.

His business and vitality failed, and in 1828 Pinkney died in Baltimore at the early age of twenty-six, which was also the span allotted to Keats.

Poe remarked that it was Pinkney's misfortune to be born too far south of New England to receive the recognition he deserved. His love lyrics have more *élan* than those of the Puritans, Longfellow and Whittier. They recall the fire and fervour of the love-songs of Burns and Byron.

Pinkney's *A Health* has an ease of movement that is very delightful to the ear. The sentiment is transcendental and gives the picture of a woman's soul rather than of rosy lips and classic form. How exquisite in expression and thought are the lines:

Her feelings have the fragrancy,  
The freshness of young flowers.

The climax seems reached at the end of the fourth verse; but no, the poem's concluding lines enhance the picture:

Her health! and would on earth there stood  
Some more of such a frame,  
That life might be all poetry,  
And weariness a name.

The poem has a light airy fantastic movement and a rare spirituality, and is an imperishable gem that has not yet received its meed of praise.

## A HEALTH

I fill this cup to one made up  
Of loveliness alone,  
A woman, of her gentle sex  
The seeming paragon;  
To whom the better elements  
And kindly stars have given  
A form so fair, that, like the air  
'T is less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,  
Like those of morning birds,  
And something more than melody  
Dwells ever in her words;  
The coinage of her heart are they,  
And from her lips each flows  
As one may see the burdened bee  
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,  
The measures of her hours;  
Her feelings have the fragrancy,  
The freshness of young flowers;  
And lovely passions, changing oft,  
So fill her, she appears  
The image of themselves by turns,—  
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace  
A picture on the brain,  
And of her voice in echoing hearts  
A sound must long remain;  
But memory, such as mine of her,  
So very much endears,  
When death is nigh my latest sigh  
Will not be life's but hers.



I fill this cup to one made up  
Of loveliness alone,  
A woman, of her gentle sex  
The seeming paragon,—  
Her health! and would on earth there stood  
Some more of such a frame,  
That life might be all poetry,  
And weariness a name.

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(1803–1882)

Ralph Waldo Emerson is a typical New Englander. New England was his birthplace and the New England farmers, “who fired the shot heard round the world,” were his heroes.

Born in Boston in 1803 and educated at Harvard, he began his public life as a Unitarian Minister. He retired from the church in a few years and went to live at Concord, devoting himself to writing essays and lecturing on man and the Universe. In 1848 he visited England, and while there he met Wordsworth at Grasmere. Eight years later he published *English Traits*, in which he praises above all other of his poems Wordsworth’s *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*.

Emerson has an intellectual coldness not found in Longfellow and Whittier. His two volumes of *Essays* are full of wise aphorisms that have a Baconian quality, but Emerson is more honest and democratic than Bacon. Many of his verses are also of a philosophic nature. In 1882, the same year that Longfellow died, Emerson succumbed to pneumonia.

### CONCORD HYMN

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April’s breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
We set today a votive stone,  
That memory may their deed redeem  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit that made those heroes dare  
To die or leave their children free,  
Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

#### DUTY

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,  
So near is God to man,  
When duty whispers low, *Thou must*,  
The youth replies, *I can*.

## ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

(1806–1861)

The Brownings are as inseparable as Hero and Leander. They first met when Browning was thirty-four and she was forty and a supposedly incurable invalid. Eighteen months later they eloped to Florence and lived in Italy for fifteen years with Mrs. Browning's health renewed until her death in 1861.

Mrs. Browning's best work is not *Aurora Leigh*, which to us sounds mawkish and mid-Victorian, nor do we admire her dramas, which are colourless and show no real dramatic power. Her enduring work is her *Sonnets from the Portuguese* and such lyrics as *A Musical Instrument*, which has a perfection of form and music and wording that make it a gem of the first water. Her most successful war-poem is *The Forced Recruit*, one of those poetic paintings that present History in a way that we can never afterwards forget. It is the art of great poets to make events live in our memories with a vividness that no prose writer can attain.

The Brownings interacted each on the other's personality and poetry, and each helped the other to step up several degrees higher. Their love-story lends charm to their poetry and their poetry attraction to their love-story.

Poe greatly admired and almost idolized Mrs. Browning, to whom in 1846 he dedicated a collection of his poems as to the noblest woman poet that this earth had known. While she had great qualities of heart, her spirit often passed her technique. She wrote too impulsively and too fluently, omitting to prune her work or sufficiently polish it except in the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

The world of today needs the culture and honesty and courage that Mrs. Browning possessed; but owing to the multiplication

of interests and the lack of time for intensive study, her verse finds fewer readers than the modern common place verse, which makes a stronger appeal to the masses. Yet no woman writer has appeared in any language with such distinctive gifts. In *The Ring and the Book* her husband paid her a noble tribute:

Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,  
Took sanctuary within the holier blue,  
And sang a kindred soul out to his face.

#### A VALEDICTION

God be with thee, my beloved,—God be with thee!  
Else alone thou goest forth,  
Thy face unto the north,  
Moor and pleasance all around thee and beneath thee  
Looking equal in one snow!  
While I who try to reach thee,  
Vainly follow, vainly follow,  
With the farewell and the hollo,  
And cannot reach thee so.  
Alas! I can but teach thee.  
God be with thee, my beloved,—God be with thee!

Can I teach thee, my beloved—can I teach thee?  
If I said, Go left or right,  
The counsel would be light,  
The wisdom, poor of all that could enrich thee!  
My right would show like left;  
My raising would depress thee,  
My choice of light would blind thee,  
Of way, would leave behind thee,  
Of end, would leave bereft!  
Alas! I can but bless thee—  
May God teach thee, my beloved,—may God teach thee!



Can I bless thee, my beloved,—can I bless thee?

What blessing word can I,

From mine own tears, keep dry ?

What flowers grow in my field wherewith to dress thee?

My good reverts to ill;

My calmnesses would move thee,

My softnesses would prick thee,

My bindings up would break thee,

My crownings, curse and kill.

Alas! I can but love thee.

May God bless thee, my beloved,—may God bless thee!

Can I love thee, my beloved,—can I love thee?

And is *this* like love, to stand

With no help in my hand,

When strong as death I fain would watch above thee?

My love-kiss can deny

No tears that fall beneath it:

Mine oath of love can swear thee

From no ill that comes near thee,—

And thou diest while I breathe it,

And I—I can but die!

May God love thee, my beloved,—may God love thee!

#### A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

What was he doing, the great god Pan,

Down in the reeds by the river?

Spreading ruin and scattering ban,

Splashing and paddling with hoofs like a goat,

And breaking the golden lilies afloat

With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,

From the deep cool bed of the river:

The limpid water turbidly ran,

And the broken lilies a-dying lay,  
And the dragon-fly had fled away,  
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,  
While turbidly flow'd the river;  
And hack'd and hew'd as a great god can,  
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,  
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed  
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,  
(How tall it stood in the river!)  
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,  
Steadily from the outside ring,  
Then notch'd the poor dry empty thing  
In holes, as he sat by the river.

'This is the way,' laughed the great god Pan,  
(Laugh'd while he sat by the river),  
'The only way, since gods began  
To make sweet music, they could succeed.'  
Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,  
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!  
Piercing sweet by the river!  
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!  
The sun on the hill forgot to die,  
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly  
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,  
To laugh as he sits by the river,  
Making a poet out of a man:  
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—  
For the reed which grows never more again  
As a reed with the reeds of the river.

## THE FORCED RECRUIT

In the ranks of the Austrian you found him;  
He died with his face to you all:  
Yet bury him here where around him  
You honor your bravest that fall.

Venetian, fair-featured and slender,  
He lies shot to death in his youth,  
With a smile on his lips over-tender  
For any mere soldier's dead mouth.

No stranger, and yet not a traitor!  
Though alien the cloth on his breast,  
Underneath it how seldom a greater  
Young heart has a shot sent to rest!

By your enemy tortured and goaded  
To march with them, stand in their file,  
His musket (see!) never was loaded—  
He facing your guns with that smile.

As orphans yearn on to their mothers,  
He yearned to your patriot bands,—  
“Let me die for our Italy, brothers,  
If not in your ranks, by your hands!

“Aim straightly, fire steadily; spare me  
A ball in the body, which may  
Deliver my heart here and tear me  
This badge of the Austrian away.”

So thought he, so died he this morning.  
What then? many others have died.  
Ay—but easy for men to die scorning  
The death-stroke, who fought side by side;

One tricolor floating above them;  
Struck down mid triumphant acclaims  
Of an Italy rescued to love them,  
And blazon the brass with their names.

But he—without witness or honour,  
Mixed, shamed in his country's regard,  
With the tyrants who march in upon her—  
Died faithful and passive: 'twas hard.

'Twas sublime. In a cruel restriction  
Cut off from the guerdon of sons,  
With most filial obedience, conviction,  
His soul kissed the lips of your guns.

That moves you? Nay, grudge not to show it,  
While digging a grave for him here.  
The others who died, says your poet,  
Have glory: let *him* have a tear.

## THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH

### I

“Now give us lands where olives grow,”  
Cried the North to the South,  
“Where the sun with a golden mouth can blow  
Blue bubbles of grapes down a vineyard row!”  
Cried the North to the South.

“Now give us men from the sunless plain,”  
Cried the South to the North,  
“By need of work in the snow and the rain  
Made strong, and brave by familiar pain!”  
Cried the South to the North.

## II

“Give lucider hills and intenser seas,”  
Said the North to the South,  
“Since ever by symbols and bright degrees  
Art, childlike, climbs to the dear Lord’s knees,”  
Said the North to the South.

“Give strenuous souls for belief and prayer,”  
Said the South to the North,  
“That stand in the dark on the lowest stair,  
While affirming of God, ‘He is certainly *there*,’ ”  
Said the South to the North.

## III

“Yet, oh, for the skies that are softer and higher!”  
Sighed the North to the South,  
“For the flowers that blaze, and the trees that aspire,  
And the insects made of a song or a fire!”  
Sighed the North to the South.

“And oh, for a seer, to discern the same!”  
Sighed the South to the North,  
“—For a poet’s tongue of baptismal flame,  
To call the tree and the flower by its name!”  
Sighed the South to the North.



## NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS

(1806-1867)

Nathaniel Parker Willis was born in Longfellow's native town of Portland, Maine, a year before his greater contemporary. He graduated from Yale in 1827 winning a prize for the best student poem. During his visit to Europe in 1831 after some trivial misunderstanding he fought a duel with Captain Marryat. In 1829 he founded *The New York Mirror* and in 1846 the *Home Journal*. During the latter year he purchased an estate at Newburg on the Hudson, which he named *Idlewild*, and where he lived until his death in 1867.

Willis for the most part wrote in a magazine style and rarely stepped up to the high mood required by the best poetry. Poe highly praised his poem entitled *Two Women*, which has a force and conviction and concentration unusual with its author. His *Poetical Scripture Sketches* once popular are now entirely forgotten. Willis was too ready a writer to produce enduring work; for great poems are wrought and re-wrought on the anvil of the soul.

### TWO WOMEN

The shadows lay along Broadway,  
'T was near the twilight-tide,  
And slowly there a lady fair  
Was walking in her pride.  
Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,  
Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,  
And Honor charmed the air;  
And all astir looked kind on her,  
And called her good as fair,—  
For all God ever gave to her  
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare  
From lovers warm and true,  
For her heart was cold to all but gold,  
And the rich came not to woo,—  
But honored well are charms to sell,  
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair,—  
A slight girl, lily-pale;  
And she had unseen company  
To make the spirit quail,—  
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,  
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow  
For this world's peace to pray;  
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,  
Her woman's heart gave way!—  
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven  
By man is cursed alway!

## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

(1807-1882)

Longfellow has been as much loved in England as in his native land. The rage for *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha* is over, but many of his shorter pieces appeal and will always appeal to the human heart, as long as it feels the softer emotions of love and pity and lives at times in the world of spirits, which surrounds the world that is visible.

Longfellow was born at Portland, Maine, in a brick house that is still standing; and later migrated to Harvard, where the mansion he lived in at Cambridge has become another feature of national interest.

Poe greatly praises Longfellow's poem, *The Day is Done*; especially the lines descriptive of "the grand old masters,"

Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through <sup>the</sup> corridors of Time.

Poe substituted "Down" for "Through" in his quotation—an undoubted improvement. The *Hymn to the Night* is one of the most perfect lyrics in the English language, and universal in its appeal as the night is universal. *A Psalm of Life* is strong verse and the utterance of a strong soul.

Longfellow's poems about children have a quality that is distinctly their own. They are living and moving pictures in verse, infused with the poet's affection and reverence for childhood. Longfellow has a sanity and cheerfulness that the world much needs, and is unaffected by the pessimism of his age. His last poem, *The Bells of San Blas*, is a noble legacy of hope to mankind.

O Bells of San Blas, in vain,  
Ye call back the Past again!  
The Past is deaf to your prayer:  
Out of the shadows of night  
The world rolls into light;  
It is daybreak everywhere.

## THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,  
That is known as the children's hour.

I hear in the chamber above me  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,  
Descending the broad hall stair,  
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,  
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence,  
Yet I know by their merry eyes  
They are plotting and planning together  
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,  
A sudden raid from the hall,  
By three doors left unguarded,  
They enter my castle wall.

They climb up into my turret,  
O'er the arms and back of my chair;  
If I try to escape, they surround me:  
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
Their arms about me entwine,  
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
In his Mouse-tower on the Rhine.

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old mustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,  
And will not let you depart,  
But put you into the dungeon  
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,  
Yes, forever and a day,  
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
And moulder in dust away.

#### MY LOST YOUTH

Often I think of the beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea;  
Often in thought go up and down  
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,  
And my youth comes back to me.  
And a verse of a Lapland song  
Is haunting my memory still:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,  
And catch, in sudden gleams,  
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,  
And islands that were the Hesperides  
Of all my boyish dreams.  
And the burden of that old song,  
It murmurs and whispers still:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."



I remember the black wharves and the slips,  
And the sea-tides tossing free;  
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,  
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,  
And the magic of the sea.  
And the voice of that wayward song  
Is singing and saying still:  
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,  
And the fort upon the hill;  
And the sunrise gun with its hollow roar,  
The drum-beat repeated o’er and o’er,  
And the bugle wild and shrill.  
And the music of that old song  
Throbs in my memory still:  
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the sea-fight far away,  
How it thunder’d o’er the tide!  
And the dead sea-captains, as they lay  
In their graves o’erlooking the tranquil bay  
Where they in battle died.  
And the sound of that mournful song  
Goes through me with a thrill:  
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I can see the breezy dome of groves,  
The shadows of Deering’s woods;  
And the friendships old and the early loves  
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves  
In quiet neighborhoods.  
And the verse of that sweet old song,  
It flutters and murmurs still:  
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

I remember the gleams and the glooms that dart  
Across the schoolboy's brain;  
The song and the silence in the heart,  
That in part are prophecies, and in part  
Are longings wild and vain.  
And the voice of that fitful song  
Sings on, and is never still:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;  
There are dreams that cannot die;  
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,  
And bring a pallor into the cheek,  
And a mist before the eye.  
And the words of that fatal song  
Come over me like a chill:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet  
When I visit the dear old town;  
But the native air is pure and sweet,  
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,  
As they balance up and down,  
Are singing the beautiful song,  
Are sighing and whispering still:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's woods are fresh and fair,  
And with joy that is almost pain  
My heart goes back to wander there,  
And among the dreams of the days that were  
I find my lost youth again.  
And the strange and beautiful song,  
The groves are repeating it still:  
"A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

## A PSALM OF LIFE

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
"Life is but an empty dream!"  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal;  
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"  
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each tomorrow  
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of Life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife.

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead;  
Act—act in the living Present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Foot-prints on the sands of Time:

Foot-prints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er Life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.

#### HYMN TO THE NIGHT

I heard the trailing garments of the Night  
Sweep through her marble halls;  
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light  
From the celestial walls.

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,  
Stoop o'er me from above—  
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,  
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,  
The manifold, soft chimes,  
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,  
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air  
My spirit drank repose;  
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there—  
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear  
What man has borne before;  
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,  
And they complain no more.

Peace! peace! Orestes-like I breathe the prayer;  
Descend with broad-winged flight,  
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,  
The best-belovéd Night!

#### THE SKELETON IN ARMOR

“Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!  
Who with thy hollow breast  
Still in rude armor drest  
Comest to daunt me!  
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,  
But with thy fleshless palms  
Stretched, as if asking alms,  
Why dost thou haunt me?”

Then from those cavernous eyes  
Pale flashes seem to rise,  
As when the Northern skies  
Gleam in December;  
And like the water's flow  
Under December's snow,  
Came a dull voice of woe  
From the heart's chamber:

“I was a Viking old!  
My deeds, though manifold,  
No Skald in song has told,  
No saga taught thee!  
Take heed, that in thy verse  
Thou dost the tale rehearse,  
Else dread a dead man's curse;  
For this I sought thee.

“Far in the Northern land,  
By the wild Baltic's strand,  
I, with my childish hand,  
Tamed the gerfalcon;



And with my skates fast bound  
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,  
That the poor whimpering hound  
Trembled to walk on.

“Oft to his frozen lair  
Tracked I the grisly bear,  
While from my path the hare  
Fled like a shadow;  
Oft through the forest dark  
Followed the were-wolf’s bark,  
Until the soaring lark  
Sang from the meadow.

“But when I older grew,  
Joining a corsair’s crew,  
O’er the dark sea I flew  
With the marauders:  
Wild was the life we led;  
Many the souls that sped,  
Many the hearts that bled,  
By our stern orders.

“Many a wassail-bout  
Wore the long winter out;  
Often our midnight shout  
Set the cocks crowing,  
As we the Berserk’s tale  
Measured in cups of ale,  
Draining the oaken pail,  
Filled to o’erflowing.

“Once as I told in glee  
Tales of the stormy sea,  
Soft eyes did gaze on me,  
Burning yet tender;

And as the white stars shine  
On the dark Norway pine,  
On that dark heart of mine  
Fell their soft splendour.

“I wooed the blue-eyed maid,  
Yielding, yet half afraid,  
And in the forest’s shade  
Our vows were plighted.  
Under its loosened vest  
Fluttered her little breast,  
Like birds within their nest  
By the hawk frightened.

“Bright in her father’s hall  
Shields gleamed upon the wall,  
Loud sang the minstrels all,  
Chaunting his glory;  
When of old Hildebrand  
I asked his daughter’s hand,  
Mute did the minstrels stand  
To hear my story.

“While the brown ale he quaffed,  
Loud then the champion laughed,  
And as the wind-gusts waft  
The sea-foam brightly,  
So the loud laugh of scorn,  
Out of those lips unshorn,  
From the deep drinking-horn  
Blew the foam lightly.

“She was a Prince’s child,  
I but a Viking wild,  
And though she blushed and smiled,  
I was discarded!

Should not the dove so white  
Follow the sea-mew's flight?  
Why did they leave that night  
Her nest unguarded?

“Scarce had I put to sea,  
Bearing the maid with me,—  
Fairest of all was she  
Among the Norsemen!—  
When on the white sea-strand,  
Waving his arméd hand,  
Saw we old Hildebrand,  
With twenty horsemen.

“Then launched they to the blast,  
Bent like a reed each mast,  
Yet we were gaining fast,  
When the wind failed us;  
And with a sudden flaw  
Came round the gusty Skaw,  
So that our foe we saw  
Laugh as he hailed us.

“And as to catch the gale  
Round veered the flapping sail,  
Death! was the helmsman's hail,  
Death without quarter!  
Midships with iron keel  
Struck we her ribs of steel;  
Down her black hulk did reel  
Through the black water.

“As with his wings aslant  
Sails the fierce cormorant,  
Seeking some rocky haunt  
With his prey laden,

So toward the open main,  
Beating to sea again,  
Through the wild hurricane  
    Bore I the maiden.

“Three weeks we westward bore,  
And when the storm was o’er,  
Cloud-like we saw the shore  
    Stretching to leeward;  
There for my lady’s bower  
Built I the lofty tower  
Which, to this very hour,  
    Stands looking seaward.

“There lived we many years;  
Time dried the maiden’s tears;  
She had forgot her fears,  
    She was a mother;  
Death closed her mild blue eyes;  
Under that tower she lies;  
Ne’er shall the sun arise  
    On such another.

“Still grew my bosom then,  
Still as a stagnant fen!  
Hateful to me were men,  
    The sun-light hateful.  
In the vast forest here,  
Clad in my warlike gear,  
Fell I upon my spear,  
    O, death was grateful!

“Thus, seamed with many scars  
Bursting these prison bars,  
Up to its native stars  
    My soul ascended!

There from the flowing bowl  
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,  
*Skool!* to the Northland! *skool!*''  
—Thus the tale ended.

### THE DAY IS DONE

The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village  
Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,  
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,  
That is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of Time.

For like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;  
And tonight I long for rest.



Read from some humbler poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have the power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction  
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

#### FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS

When the hours of day are numbered,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul that slumbered  
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
And, like phantoms grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
Dance upon the parlour wall;

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door;  
The belovéd, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more.

He, the young and strong, who cherished  
Noble longings for the strife,  
By the roadside fell and perished,  
Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
Who the cross of suffering bore,  
Folded their pale hands so meekly,  
Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being beauteous,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all things else to love me,  
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep  
Comes that messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not yet comprehended  
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,  
Breathing from the lips of air.

Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died!

## THE RAINY DAY

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,  
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;  
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.

## WEARINESS

O little feet! that such long years  
Must wander on through hopes and fears,  
Must ache and bleed beneath your load;  
I, nearer to the wayside Inn,  
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,  
Am weary, thinking of your road!

O little hands! that weak or strong  
Have still to serve or rule so long,  
Have still so long to give or ask;  
I, who so much with book and pen  
Have toiled among my fellow-men,  
Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat  
With such impatient feverish heat,  
Such limitless and strong desires;  
Mine that so long has glowed and burned,  
With passions into ashes turned,  
Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls! as pure and white  
And crystalline as rays of light  
Direct from heaven, their source divine;  
Refracted through the mist of years,  
How red my setting sun appears,  
How lurid looks this soul of mine!

### EXCELSIOR

The shades of night were falling fast,  
As through an Alpine village passed  
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,  
A banner with the strange device,  
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,  
Flashed like falchion from its sheath;  
And like a silver clarion rung,  
The accents of that unknown tongue,  
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light  
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;  
Above, the spectral glacier shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
Excelsior!

“Try not the Pass!” the old man said;  
“Dark lowers the tempest overhead,  
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!”  
And loud that clarion voice replied,  
Excelsior!

“O stay,” the maiden said, “and rest  
Thy weary head upon this breast!”  
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
Excelsior!

“Beware the pine tree’s withered branch!  
Beware the awful avalanche!”  
This was the peasant’s last Goodnight,  
A voice replied, far up the height,  
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward  
The pious monks of Saint Bernard  
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,  
A voice cried through the startled air,  
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,  
Half-buried by the snow was found,  
Still grasping in his hand of ice  
That banner with the strange device,  
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,  
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,  
And from the sky, serene and far,  
A voice fell, like a falling star,  
Excelsior!

#### BECALMED

Becalmed upon the sea of thought,  
Still unattained the land it sought,  
My mind, with loosely-hanging sails,  
Lies waiting the auspicious gales.



On either side, behind, before,  
The ocean stretches like a floor,—  
A level floor of amethyst,  
Crowned by a golden dome of mist.

Blow, breath of inspiration, blow!  
Shake and uplift this golden glow!  
And fill the canvas of the mind  
With wafts of thy celestial wind.

Blow, breath of song! until I feel  
The straining sail, the lifting keel,  
The life of the awakening sea,  
Its motion and its mystery!

#### THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For who has sight so keen and strong  
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

#### THE BELLS OF SAN BLAS

What say the Bells of San Blas  
To the ships that southward pass  
From the harbour of Mazatlan?  
To them it is nothing more  
Than the sound of surf on the shore,  
Nothing more to master or man.

But to me a dreamer of dreams,  
To whom what is and what seems  
Are often one and the same,—  
The Bells of San Blas to me  
Have 'a strange, wild melody,  
And are something more than a name.

For bells are the voice of the church:  
They have tones that touch and search  
The heart of young and old:  
One sound to all, yet each  
Lends a meaning to their speech,  
And the meaning is manifold.

They are the voice of the Past,  
Of an age that is fading fast,  
Of a power austere and grand;  
When the flag of Spain unfurled  
Its folds o'er this western world  
And the priest was lord of the land.

The chapel that once looked down  
On the little seaport town  
Has crumbled into the dust;  
And on oaken beams below  
The bells swing to and fro,  
And are green with mould and rust.

“Is then, the old faith dead,”  
They say, “and in its stead  
Is some new faith proclaimed,  
That we are forced to remain  
Naked to sun and rain,  
Unsheltered and unashamed?”

“Once in our tower aloof  
We rang over wall and roof  
Our warnings and our complaints;

And round about us there  
The white doves filled the air,  
Like the white souls of the saints.

“The saints! Ah, have they grown  
Forgetful of their own?  
Are they asleep, or dead,  
That open to the sky  
Their ruined Missions lie,  
No longer tenanted?

“Oh, bring us back once more  
The vanished days of yore,  
When the world with faith was filled:  
Bring back the fervid zeal,  
The hearts of fire and steel,  
The hands that believe and build.

“Then from our tower again  
We will send over land and main  
Our voices of command,  
Like exiled kings who return  
To their thrones, and the people learn  
That the priest is lord of the land!”

O Bells of San Blas, in vain  
Ye call back the past again!  
The Past is deaf to your prayer:  
Out of the shadows of night  
The world rolls into light;  
It is daybreak everywhere.

## JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

(1807-1892)

Whittier was born of Quaker parents at Haverhill, Massachusetts, in 1807. As a boy he worked on his father's farm and later learned the shoemaking trade. He lived a quiet life "far from the madding crowd" until roused into action by William Lloyd Garrison and his paper *The Liberator*.

Before the Civil War Whittier wrote much anti-slavery poetry, published as *The Voices of Freedom*, in which, however, he did not bear arms, that being contrary to the Quaker creed. Lincoln replied to Whittier, who wished to end slave oppression without bloodshed, that war was the only solution. In his poem *Snow-bound*, Whittier gives us a sympathetic picture of the simple life on his father's farm and draws for us the characters of all the members of the household. Whittier himself never married.

His poetry has no variety of measures nor any great range of thought, but it appeals to the human heart. His short poem, *The Light That is Felt*, written when he was nearly eighty, is in the nature of a swan-song and sums up his religion, which had an inspirational rather than a verbal basis. He lived to the venerable old age of eighty-five and died quietly in Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, in September, 1892, a month before Tennyson.

### THE LIGHT THAT IS FELT

A tender child of summers three,  
Seeking her little bed at night,  
Paused on the dark stairs timidly—  
"O mother! Take my hand (said she)  
And then the dark will all be light."

We older children grope our way  
From dark behind to dark before,  
And only when our hand we lay,  
Dear Lord, in Thine the night is day,  
And there is darkness never more.

Reach downward to our sunless days,  
Wherein our guides are blind as we;  
And faith is small and hope delays;  
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,  
And let us feel the light of Thee!

#### THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

O friends! with whom my feet have trod  
The quiet aisles of prayer,  
Glad witness to your zeal for God  
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;  
Your logic linked and strong  
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,  
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak  
To hold your iron creeds:  
Against the words ye bid me speak  
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?  
Who talks of scheme and plan?  
The Lord is God! He needeth not  
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground  
Ye tread with boldness shod;  
I dare not fix with mete and bound  
The love and power of God.

Ye praise His justice; even such  
His pitying love I deem:  
Ye see a king; I fain would touch  
The robe that hath no seam.



Ye see the curse which overbroods  
A world of pain and loss;  
I hear our Lord's beatitudes  
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within  
Myself, alas! I know:  
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,  
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,  
I veil mine eyes for shame,  
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,  
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,  
I feel the guilt within;  
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,  
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,  
And tossed by storm and flood,  
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;  
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim  
And seraphs may not see,  
But nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below  
I dare not throne above,  
I know not of His hate,—I know  
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known  
Of greater out of sight,  
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own  
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone,  
For vanished smiles I long,  
But God hath led my dear ones on,  
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath  
Of marvel or surprise,  
Assured alone that life and death  
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak  
To bear an untried pain,  
The bruised reed He will not break,  
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,  
Nor works my faith to prove;  
I can but give the gifts He gave,  
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea  
I wait the muffled oar;  
No harm from Him can come to me  
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care.

O brothers! if my faith is vain,  
If hopes like these betray,  
Pray for me that my feet may gain  
The sure and safer way.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen  
Thy creatures as they be,  
Forgive me if too close I lean  
My human heart on Thee!

## OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

(1809–1894)

This writer of many gifts was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the same year as Abraham Lincoln and Alfred Tennyson. He graduated from Harvard in 1829 and then studied the law, which he soon gave up for medicine. After three years in the hospitals of Edinburgh and Paris, he returned to be Professor of Anatomy at Dartmouth College and later at Harvard.

Holmes published scientific works, novels, poems, and essays, and in 1857 his *Autocrat at the Breakfast Table* to be followed by the *Professor* and the *Poet* in the same place. For fifty years he was the sparkling ornament of Boston society. His verse is always lucid and instructive but lacks the magic and music of the greater poets. His pen was the pen of a ready writer, and his humour was always just below the surface.

### OLD IRONSIDES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!  
Long has it waved on high,  
And many an eye has danced to see  
That banner in the sky;  
Beneath it rung the battle shout,  
And burst the cannon's roar;—  
The meteor of the ocean air  
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,  
Where knelt the vanquished foe,  
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,  
And waves were white below,  
No more shall feel the victor's tread,  
Or know the conquered knee;—  
The harpies of the shore shall pluck  
The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk  
Should sink beneath the wave;  
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,  
And there should be her grave;  
Nail to the mast her holy flag,  
Set every threadbare sail,  
And give her to the god of storms,  
The lightning and the gale!

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

(1809-1849)

Poe is a poet *sui generis*. He has no poetic affiliations. He is a lonely figure and there is something spectral in his work and life. The child of stage parents, who both died in his infancy; he was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Allan of Virginia and sent to school in England when but six years old, where he remained five years. After his return, he studied at the University of Virginia but ran away to Boston before taking a degree. There he enlisted in the army under the name of Edgar Perry, and in 1829 he published *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. The following year Mr. Allan sent him to West Point, but the experiment seems to have been unfruitful except for the publication of his second volume, *Poems*, which was accomplished after his expulsion with help received from his student-friends.

Upon the death of Mrs. Allan, Mr. Allan married again, and Poe was cast off by his foster parent. He went to Baltimore and there lived with his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, whose daughter Virginia he married in 1836, when she was but thirteen years old. In 1837 he came with his wife to New York, and in 1846 moved to a poor little cottage in Fordham which is now a Poe museum. The year after this change of residence his fragile girl-wife died.

Poe earned a precarious living by writing for the magazines of his day numerous tales, of which *The Black Cat*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, and *The Murders of the Rue Morgue* are well known. *The Raven*, published in 1845, made him famous. Following the same mournful theme, he wrote *Annabel Lee* and *Ulalume*, two of his most finished and moving pieces.

In the last months of his life, he was nursed back to a certain measure of health by a lady of Richmond, Virginia, to whom he dedicated the touching lines entitled *To Annie*, his last poem. In September, 1849, he was found dying in the streets of Baltimore, and on the fourth day after, he passed away without recovering consciousness.



The elements in Poe's composition were first a delicate and subtle poetic ear, in which he is nearest to Tennyson, who, however, is more successful in concealing his art: and second a rare spirituality, that made its possessor the victim of unnatural illusions and strange terrors. Surrounded by friends in the last years of his life, he was still profoundly unhappy. The spectres never left his mind, a fact admirably illustrated by *The Raven*, which presents us with a vivid picture of Poe's suffering and is a cry of despair comparable only with Cowper's *Castaway*. Poetry and potions were the only relief he knew, and both were but temporary alleviations. If ever a man was haunted by invisible enemies, it was Edgar Allan Poe.

Longfellow proposed as Poe's epitaph the line in Poe's last poem:

The fever called living is ended at last.

#### TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me  
Like those Nicéan barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece,  
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy-Land!

ANNABEL LEE

I was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden lived whom you may know  
By the name of Annabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love, and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea;  
But we loved with a love that was more than love,  
I and my Annabel Lee,—  
With a love that the wingéd seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of cloud, chilling  
My beautiful Annabel Lee;  
So that her high-born kinsmen came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre,  
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me.  
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know)  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,  
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
Of those who were older than we,  
Of many far wiser than we;  
And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee,  
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.  
And so, all the night-tide I lie down by the side  
Of my darling, my darling, my life, and my bride,  
In her sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

### EULALIE

I dwelt alone  
In a world of moan,  
And my soul was a stagnant tide,  
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing  
bride—  
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling  
bride.

Ah, less—less bright  
The stars of the night  
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!  
And never a flake  
That the vapor can make  
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,  
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl—  
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble  
and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain  
Come never again,  
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,  
And all day long  
Shines, bright and strong,  
Astarté within the sky,  
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—  
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

## ULALUME

The skies they were ashen and sober;  
The leaves they were crispéd and sere—  
The leaves they were withering and sere;  
It was night in the lonesome October  
Of my most immemorial year:  
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid-region of Weir—  
It was down by the dim tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoulishaunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic  
Of cypress, I roamed with my soul—  
Of cypress, with Psyche, my soul.  
These were days when my heart was volcanic  
As the scoriac rivers that roll—  
As the lavas that restlessly roll  
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
In the ultimate climes of the pole—  
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—  
Our memories were treacherous and sere—  
For we knew not the month was October,  
And we marked not the night of the year—  
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)  
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—  
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—  
Remembered not the dark tarn of Auber,  
Nor the ghoulishaunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent,  
And star-dials pointed to morn—  
As the star-dials hinted of morn—  
At the end of our path a liquescent

And nebulous lustre was born,  
Out of which a miraculous crescent  
Arose with a duplicate horn—  
Astarté's bediamonded crescent,  
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said, "She is warmer than Dian:  
She rolls through an ether of sighs—  
She revels in a region of sighs:  
She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,  
And has come past the stars of the Lion  
To point us the path to the skies—  
To the Lethean peace of the skies—  
Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
To shine on us with her bright eyes—  
Come up through the lair of the Lion  
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
Said, "Sadly this star I mistrust—  
Her pallor I strangely mistrust.  
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!  
Oh, fly! let us fly! for we must."  
In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
Wings till they trailed in the dust—  
In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—  
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied, "This is nothing but dreaming:  
Let us on by this tremulous light—  
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!  
Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming  
With hope and in beauty tonight.  
See! it flickers up the sky through the night!



Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
And be sure it will lead us aright—  
We safely may trust to a gleaming,  
That cannot but guide us aright,  
Since it flickers up to heaven through the night.”

Thus I pacified Psyche, and kissed her,  
And tempted her out of her gloom—  
And conquered her scruples and gloom;  
And we passed to the end of the vista,  
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—  
By the door of a legended tomb;  
And I said, “What is written, sweet sister,  
On the door of this legended tomb?”  
She replied, “Ulalume—Ulalume—  
’Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!”

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
As the leaves that were crispéd and sere—  
As the leaves that were withering and sere,  
And I cried, “It was surely October,  
On this very night of last year,  
That I journeyed, I journeyed down here,  
That I brought a dead burden down here,  
On this night of all nights of the year.  
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?  
Well I know now this dim lake of Auber,  
This misty mid-region of Weir,  
Well I know now this dank tarn of Auber,  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”

#### TO ONE IN PARADISE

Thou wast that all to me, love,  
For which my soul did pine—  
A green isle in the sea, love,  
A fountain and a shrine,  
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!  
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise  
But to be overcast!  
A voice from out the Future cries,  
“On! on!”—but o’er the Past  
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For alas! alas! with me  
The light of life is o’er!  
“No more—no more—no more—”  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,  
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,  
And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy dark eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams,  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams.

### THE RAVEN

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and  
weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a  
tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber  
door.  
“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber  
door,  
Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,  
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon  
the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to  
borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost  
Lenore,

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore,

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple cur-  
tain

Thrilled me, filled me with fantastic terrors never felt  
before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood re-  
peating:

“’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber  
door—

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber  
door;—

This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no  
longer,

“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I im-  
plore;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came  
rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber  
door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide  
the door;

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,  
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;  
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,  
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word,  
    “Lenore!”  
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word,  
    “Lenore!”  
        Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.  
“Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window lattice;  
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;  
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore;  
        ’Tis the wind and nothing more.”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,  
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.  
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he,  
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,  
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door,  
        Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,  
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it  
wore,  
“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said,  
“art sure no craven,  
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the  
Nightly shore;  
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian  
shore!”  
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so  
plainly,  
Though its answer little meaning, little relevancy bore;  
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being  
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber  
door—  
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber  
door,  
With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke  
only  
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did out-  
pour.  
Nothing further then he uttered; not a feather then he  
fluttered;  
Till I scarcely more than muttered: “Other friends have  
flown before;  
On the morrow *he* will leave me as my hopes have flown  
before.”  
Then the bird said, “Nevermore.”



Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,  
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and  
store,  
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful  
disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one  
burden bore,  
Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore  
Of ‘Never—nevermore.’ ”

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,  
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and  
bust and door;  
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking  
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of  
yore,  
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous  
bird of yore,  
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing  
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s  
core;  
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease re-  
clining  
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated  
o’er,  
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloat-  
ing o’er  
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an  
unseen censer  
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted  
floor.  
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these  
angels He hath sent thee  
Respite, respite and nepenthe from thy memories of  
Lenore!  
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost  
Lenore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil! prophet still, if bird  
or devil!  
Whether Tempter sent or whether tempest tossed thee  
here ashore,  
Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land en-  
chaunted,  
On this home by Horror haunted, tell me truly, I implore,  
Is there, is there balm in Gilead? tell me, tell me, I im-  
plore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil! prophet still, if bird  
or devil!  
By the heaven that bends above us, by that God we both  
adore,  
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant  
Aidenn,  
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore.  
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore.”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I  
shrieked, upstarting;  
“Get thee back into the tempest and the night’s Plutonian  
shore!  
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath  
spoken!  
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my  
door!  
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from  
off my door!”  
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sit-  
ting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;  
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is  
dreaming,  
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow  
on the floor;  
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on  
the floor  
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

#### FOR ANNIE

Thank Heaven! the crisis—  
The danger is past,  
And the lingering illness  
Is over at last,  
And the fever called “Living”  
Is conquered at last.

Sadly I know  
I am shorn of my strength,  
And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length;  
But no matter! I feel  
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,  
Now, in my bed  
That any beholder  
Might fancy me dead—  
Might start at beholding me,  
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,  
The sighing and sobbing,  
Are quieted now,  
With that horrible throbbing  
At heart—ah, that horrible  
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness, the nausea,  
The pitiless pain,  
Have ceased, with the fever  
That maddened my brain,  
With the fever called “Living”  
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures  
That torture the worst  
Has abated—the terrible  
Torture of thirst  
For the naphthaline river  
Of Passion accurst;  
I have drunk of a water  
That quenches all thirst:

Of a water that flows,  
With a lullaby sound,  
From a spring but a very few  
Feet under ground,  
From a cavern not very far  
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never  
Be foolishly said  
That my room it is gloomy  
And narrow my bed;  
For man never slept  
In a different bed—  
And, to sleep, you must slumber  
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit  
Here blandly reposes,  
Forgetting, or never  
Regretting, its roses—  
Its old agitations  
Of myrtles and roses;

For now, while so quietly  
Lying, it fancies  
A holier odor  
About it, of pansies—  
A rosemary odor,  
Commingled with pansies,  
With rue and the beautiful  
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,  
Bathing in many  
A dream of the truth  
And the beauty of Annie,  
Drowned in a bath  
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,  
She fondly caressed,  
And then I fell gently  
To sleep on her breast,  
Deeply to sleep  
From the heaven of her breast.



When the light was extinguished  
She covered me warm,  
And she prayed to the angels  
To keep me from harm,  
To the queen of the angels  
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly  
Now in my bed,  
(Knowing her love)  
That you fancy me dead;  
And I rest so contentedly  
Now in my bed,  
(With her love at my breast)  
That you fancy me dead—  
That you shudder to look at me,  
Thinking me dead.

But my heart is brighter  
Than all of the many  
Stars in the sky,  
For it sparkles with Annie—  
It glows with the light  
Of the love of my Annie,  
With the thought of the light  
Of the eyes of my Annie.

## ALFRED TENNYSON

(1809–1892)

The fame of Tennyson has decreased since his death. In life he was lauded too much. Since he has gone from us, he has perhaps been praised too little. He was born in 1809 in his father's Vicarage at Somersby, near Louth, in Lincolnshire, and was one of a singing family.

His first book was a joint work with his brother Charles,—*Poems of Two Brothers*,—printed in 1827, when he was but eighteen. In 1832 he published alone a second volume, which included *The Lady of Shalott* and *The May Queen*, and gave the first evidence of his poetic gift. In 1842 came another volume, and in 1850, *In Memoriam*. In that year Wordsworth died, and Tennyson became Poet Laureate. He was much beloved by Queen Victoria, to whom he addressed, at the beginning of *In Memoriam*, some noble lines on the death of the Prince Consort. His fame grew rapidly fanned by the breath of royalty, and he was soon able to buy an estate in the Isle of Wight, and build besides a house at Aldworth in Surrey with church-like porch and pillars, and the Christmas Angelic Song in Latin sculptured around his mansion on the outside. In this and other instances, Tennyson showed many of the qualities of his father, who was a cultured English clergyman.

We see the poet ensconcing himself behind high walls, far from the profane crowd, and in the silence meditating and murmuring his exquisite music. In his finer pieces, such as *Tithonus*, *Ulysses*, and the priceless lyrics of *The Princess*, there is a quality of sound that Poe perceived and that he, more than any other poet, successfully imitated. Even in such early poems as *The Lady of Shalott*, he shows his sense of the music of words, and an ear subtle almost as that of Shakespeare.

This quality of music, when combined with noble thought, results in such gems as *Crossing the Bar*, which has a poetic perfume as delicate as that of the rose itself. Browning's verse has

a harsher sound, and although stronger is never so ethereal. Wordsworth is musical only in spots, and seems unable to distinguish the moods when he is poetic from those when he is prosaic. Not so Tennyson. He polishes and repolishes till his verse meets with the approval of his sensitive and finely strung ear, and is thus certain to charm all readers who are responsive to the music of poetry.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT

### I

On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And through the field the road runs by  
    To many-towered Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
    The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Through the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
    Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
    The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
    Skimming down to Camelot:

But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
Down to towered Camelot:  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers: "'Tis the fairy  
Lady of Shalott."

## II

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot:  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
    Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
And sometimes through the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often through the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights,  
    And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
"I am half sick of shadows," said  
    The Lady of Shalott.

### III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
    Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield;  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
    Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
    As he rode down to Camelot:



And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armour rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often through the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
"Tirra lirra," by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces through the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
"The curse is come up on me!" cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

#### IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining  
Heavily the low sky raining

Over tower'd Camelot;

Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote

*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse—  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance

Did she look to Camelot.

And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Through the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot:

And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;

For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharves they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this? and what is here?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot:  
But Lancelot mused a little space;  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in His mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott."

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play!  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.

#### THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy autumn fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail  
That brings our friends up from the under world,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge,—  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square,—  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret,  
O death in life! the days that are no more.

## FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!  
So they rowed, and there we landed—"O venusta Sirmio!"

There to me through all the groves of olive in the summer glow,

There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,

Came that *Ave atque Vale* of the Poet's hopeless woe,  
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago,—  
*Frater, Ave atque Vale*,—as we wandered to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below;  
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island olive-silvery Sirmio!

## SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel:  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands,  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall!  
For them I battle till the end,  
To save from shame and thrall:  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine.



More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
Me mightier transports move and thrill;  
So keep I fair through faith and prayer  
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
A light before me swims,  
Between dark stems the forest glows,  
I hear a noise of hymns:  
Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
I hear a voice but none are there;  
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
The tapers burning fair.  
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
I find a magic bark;  
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light!  
Three angels bear the Holy Grail:  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.  
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!  
My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
As down dark tides the glory slides,  
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
Through dreaming towns I go,  
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
The streets are dumb with snow.  
The tempest crackles on the leads,  
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;  
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height;  
No branchy thicket shelter yields;  
But blesséd forms in whistling storms  
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
Such hope, I know not fear;  
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
That often meet me here.  
I muse on joy that will not cease,  
Pure spaces cloth'd in living beams,  
Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
Whose odors haunt my dreams;  
And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
This mortal armor that I wear,  
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,  
Are touch'd, are turned to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
And through the mountain walls  
A rolling organ-harmony  
Swell up, and shakes and falls.  
Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
“O just and faithful knight of God!  
Ride on! the prize is near.”  
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange,  
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,  
Until I find the Holy Grail.

#### TITHONUS

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,  
The vapours weep their burden to the ground,  
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,  
And after many a summer dies the swan.  
Me only cruel immortality  
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms,

Here at the quiet limit of the world;  
A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream  
The ever-silent spaces of the East,  
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man,—  
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seemed  
To his great heart none other than a god!  
I asked thee, "Give me immortality."  
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,  
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.  
But thy strong Hours indignant worked their wills  
And beat me down and marred and wasted me,  
And though they could not end me, left me maimed  
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,  
Thy beauty, make amends, though even now,  
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears  
To hear me? Let me go: take back thy gift:  
Why should a man desire in any way  
To vary from the kindly race of men,  
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart: there comes  
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.  
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals  
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,  
And bosom beating with a heart renewed.  
Thy cheek begins to redden through the gloom,  
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,  
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team  
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,  
And shake the darkness from their loosened manes,  
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
In silence, then before thine answer given  
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,  
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt  
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?  
“The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts.”

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart  
In days far-off, and with what other eyes  
I used to watch—if I be he that watched—  
The lucid outline forming round thee; saw  
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood  
Glow with the glow that slowly crimsoned all  
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,  
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm  
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds  
Of April, and could hear the lips that kissed  
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,  
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,  
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not forever in thine East:  
How can my nature longer mix with thine?  
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet  
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam  
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes  
Of happy men that have the power to die,  
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.  
Release me, and restore me to the ground:  
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;  
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn:  
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,  
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

## THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

### *Extract*

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
Beneath them; and descending they were 'ware  
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,  
Back-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold; and from them rose  
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation like a wind that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the barge."  
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the King and wept:  
But she that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,  
And called him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against a brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white  
And colourless, and like the withered moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls,  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the daïs-throne, were parched with dust;  
Or clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.  
So like a shattered column lay the King:  
Not like the Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.



Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:  
“Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
Such times have been not since the light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved,  
Which was an image of the mighty world,  
And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other minds,”

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:  
“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go  
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—  
To the island valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies

Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns,  
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.”

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
Moved from the brink like some full-breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away.

## IN MEMORIAM

*(Extracts)*

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

\* \* \* \* \*

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
No other thought her mind admits  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And He that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede  
All other, when her ardent gaze  
Roves from the living brother's face,  
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
Borne down by gladness so complete,  
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet  
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,  
Whose loves in higher love endure:  
What souls possess themselves so pure,  
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

\* \* \* \* \*

Thy voice is on the rolling air;  
I hear thee where the waters run:  
Thou standest in the rising sun,  
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;  
But though I seem in star and flower  
To feel thee some diffusive power,  
I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before:  
My love is vaster passion now;  
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,  
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;  
I have thee still, and I rejoice:  
I prosper, circled with thy voice:  
I shall not lose thee though I die.

#### CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.



## ALFRED DOMMETT

(1811-1887)

Alfred Dommett was a friend of Robert Browning in London when they were both in their twenties. He spent thirty years of his life in New Zealand, where he finally became Prime Minister. Browning addresses him in his poem *The Guardian Angel* as "Alfred, dear friend" and asks the question:

How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?

Dommett himself wrote many poems, some suggested by New Zealand themes; but none of them rose to the same high level as the work of his friend. His *Christmas Hymn* is his masterpiece and has a rare beauty of form and feeling. We are made conscious of *the* night and of the wondrous fact that the Roman world was unaware of until the new-born Child overthrew the rule of the Caesars. Especially true and poetical are the lines:

How calm a moment may precede  
One that shall thrill the world forever!

Dommett died two years before Browning, who was born the year after him.

### A CHRISTMAS HYMN

It was the calm and silent night!  
Seven hundred years and fifty-three  
Had Rome been growing up to might,  
And now was queen of land and sea.  
No sound was heard of clashing wars,—  
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain:  
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars  
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!  
The senator of haughty Rome,  
Impatient, urged his chariot's flight,  
From lordly revel rolling home;  
Triumphal arches, gleaming, swell  
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;  
What recked the Roman what befell  
A paltry province far away,  
    In the solemn midnight,  
        Centuries ago?

Within that province far away  
Went plodding home a weary boor;  
A streak of light before him lay,  
Fallen through a half-shut stable door  
Across his path. He passed,—for naught  
Told what was going on within;  
How keen the stars, his only thought,—  
The air, how calm, and cold, and thin,  
    In the solemn midnight,  
        Centuries ago!

O, strange indifference! low and high  
Drowsed over common joys and cares;  
The earth was still,—but knew not why;  
The world was listening, unawares.  
How calm a moment may precede  
One that shall thrill the world forever!  
To that still moment, none would heed,  
Man's doom was linked no more to sever,—  
    In the solemn midnight,  
        Centuries ago!

It is the calm and solemn night!  
A thousand bells ring out, and throw  
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite  
The darkness,—charmed and holy now!  
The night that erst no name had worn,  
To it a happy name is given;  
For in that stable lay, new-born,  
The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

## ROBERT BROWNING

(1812-1889)

Robert Browning was born in London in 1812 and died in Venice in 1889. His father was an English bank clerk; his mother the daughter of a German named Wiedemann and his Scotch wife. Browning was a mixture of three nationalities, and his poetry shows marks of the amalgamation. Scotland gives him fire, England fancy, while Germany inclines him to philosophy.

In 1846 he eloped with the poetess Elizabeth Barrett. Three years later they had a son born in Florence; where, after fifteen years of happy married life, Mrs. Browning died in 1861.

Browning's best work is to be found in the volumes, *Men and Women* and *Dramatis Personae*. *The Ring and the Book*, wrongly called his masterpiece, is too long, too philosophic, and too burdened with Latin and Latinistic words ever to rank with great poetry. It is by his lyrics that Browning lives and will live. There is more poetry in *Evelyn Hope* than in the whole of *Pachiarotto* or *Fifine at the Fair* or *The Parleyings*. Browning has the gift of poetic narration and uses it effectively in *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* and in some later work, such as *Pheidippides* and *Halbert and Hob*.

He is an optimist, a fact that has been attributed to his good digestion, but which is the outcome of his sanity and Christianity. He has not Tennyson's magic music, but to make up for this he shows some of the native force and fire and democracy of Burns in his best work, combined with a wider view of the world outside of England. Browning is the thinker's poet, and needs interpretation to be fully understood and appreciated. The meaning of individual lines is often hard to determine; but the purport of his poetry as a whole is clear and uplifting.

The correspondence of Browning and his wife before their marriage has been given to the world by their son and edited *verbatim* by Sir Frederick Kenyon. While one shrinks from

reading some of the more intimate phrases, the letters show Browning in a noble light as the lover who inspired Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

After his wife's death Browning lived in England, never re-visiting Florence. He was a genial companion at dinners, and in his later life often appeared at his friend's homes with his own bottle of port. His friend Dean Boyle described him in his last years as "passionately Christian." He was passionate too in his outburst at the publication of Fitzgerald's *Journal*, which contained a slur on his wife.

The invocation of his lyric love in *The Ring and the Book* is well known to all Browning readers—

O lyric love, half angel and half bird,  
And all a wonder and a wild desire.

A subtle description of Browning's method of life after the death of his wife might be gathered from his poem *A Grammarian's Funeral*:

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,  
Fierce as a dragon  
He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)  
Sucked at the flagon.

Verily none of the world's great poets has shown such an insatiable thirst for all learning or pursued it with greater ardour to the last moment of his life.

#### EVELYN HOPE

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!  
Sit and watch by her side an hour,  
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;  
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,  
Beginning to die, too, in the glass.  
Little has yet been changed, I think;  
The shutters are shut,—no light may pass  
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.



Sixteen years old when she died!  
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name,—  
It was not her time to love; beside,  
Her life had many a hope and aim,  
Duties enough and little cares;  
And now was quiet, now astir,—  
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,  
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?  
What! your soul was pure and true;  
The good stars met in your horoscope,  
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew;  
And just because I was thrice as old,  
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,  
Each was naught to each, must I be told?  
We were fellow-mortals,—naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above  
Is great to grant as mighty to make  
And creates the love to reward the love;  
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!  
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,  
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few;  
Much is to learn and much to forget  
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will—  
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,  
In the lower earth,—in the years long still,—  
That body and soul so pure and gay?  
Why your hair was amber I shall divine,  
And your mouth of your own geranium's red,—  
And what you would do with me, in fine,  
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived, I shall say, so much since then,  
Given up myself so many times,  
Gained me the gains of various men,  
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;  
Yet one thing—one—in my soul's full scope,  
Either I missed or itself missed me,  
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!  
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while;  
My heart seemed full as it could hold,—  
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,  
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.  
So hush! I will give you this leaf to keep;  
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand.  
There, that is our secret! go to sleep;  
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

#### PIPPA'S SONG

The year's at the spring,  
The day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hill-side's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in His heaven—  
All's right with the world.

#### THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave  
That child, when thou hast done with him for me!  
Let me sit all the day here that when eve  
Shall find performed thy special ministry,  
And time come for departure, thou, suspending  
Thy flight, mayst see another child for tending,  
Another still to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,  
From where thou standest now to where I gaze.  
And suddenly my head is covered o'er  
With those wings white above the child who prays  
Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee guarding  
Me, out of all the world; for me discarding  
Yon heaven, thy home, that waits and opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head  
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,  
For I should have thy gracious face instead,  
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low  
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,  
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether  
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest  
My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands  
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,  
Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,  
Back to its proper size again, and soothing  
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,  
And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!  
I think how I should view the earth and skies  
And sea, when once again my brow was bared  
After thy healing, with such different eyes.  
O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:  
And knowing this is love, and love is duty.  
What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach  
(Alfred, dear friend!)—that little child to pray,  
Holding the little hands up, each to each  
Pressed gently,—with his own head turned away  
Over the earth where so much lay before him  
Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,  
And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went  
To sit and see him in his chapel there  
And drink his beauty to our soul's content  
—My angel with me too: and since I care  
For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power  
And glory comes this picture for a dower,  
Fraught with a pathos so magnificent)

And since he did not work thus earnestly  
At all times, and has else endured some wrong—  
I took one thought his picture struck from me,  
And spread it out, translating it to song.  
My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?  
How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?  
This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

#### YOU'LL LOVE ME YET

You'll love me yet, and I can tarry  
Your love's protracted growing;  
June reared that bunch of flowers you carry  
From seeds of April's sowing.

I plant a heartful now! Some seed  
At least is sure to strike,  
And yield what you'll not pluck indeed,  
Nor praise; but, maybe, like.

You'll look at last on love's remains,  
A grave's one violet;  
Your look?—that pays a thousand pains:  
What's death? You'll love me yet.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
 Looking as if she were alive. I call  
 That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands  
 Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
 "Frà Pandolf" by design: for never read  
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
 The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
 But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
 And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
 How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not  
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps  
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
 Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff  
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
 A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,  
 Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
 Sir, 't was all one! My favor at her breast,  
 The drooping of the daylight in the West,  
 The bough of cherries some officious fool  
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked  
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill



In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say, “Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark”—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
—E’en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh, Sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene’er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will’t please you rise? We’ll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat,  
The Count your master’s known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter’s self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we’ll go  
Together down, Sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me?

#### THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I said—Then, dearest, since ’tis so,  
Since now at length my fate I know,  
Since nothing all my love avails,  
Since all, my life seem’d meant for, fails,  
Since this was written and needs must be—  
My whole heart rises up to bless  
Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim  
Only a memory of the same,  
—And this beside, if you will not blame;  
Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers,  
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
When pity would be softening through,  
Fix'd me a breathing-while or two  
With life or death in the balance: right!  
The blood replenish'd me again;  
My last thought was at least not vain:  
I and my mistress, side by side  
Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
So, one day more am I deified.  
Who knows but the world may end tonight?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
All billowy-bosom'd, over-bow'd  
By many benedictions—sun's  
And moon's and evening-star's at once—  
And so, you, looking and loving best,  
Conscious grew, your passion drew  
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
Down on you, near and yet more near,  
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here!—  
Thus leant she and linger'd—joy and fear!  
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
Smooth'd itself out, a long-cramp'd scroll  
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
Past hopes already lay behind.  
What need to strive with a life awry?  
Had I said that, had I done this,  
So might I gain, so might I miss.  
Might she have loved me? just as well  
She might have hated, who can tell!  
Where had I been now if the worst befell?  
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
Why, all men strive and who succeeds?  
We rode; it seem'd my spirit flew,  
Saw other regions, cities new,  
As the world rush'd by on either side.  
I thought,—All labor, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty done, the undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!  
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever pair'd ?  
What heart alike conceived and dared?  
What act proved all its thought had been?  
What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
There's many a crown for who can reach.  
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!  
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
A soldier's doing! what atones?  
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.  
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
Your brain beats into rhythm, you tell  
What we felt only; you express'd  
You hold things beautiful the best,  
And place them in rhyme so, side by side.  
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,  
Have you yourself what's best for men?  
Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—  
Nearer one whit your own sublime  
Than we who have never turn'd a rhyme?  
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave  
A score of years to Art, her slave,  
And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
To yonder girl that fords the burn!  
You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
What, man of music, you grown gray  
With notes and nothing else to say,  
Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
'Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
But in music we know how fashions end!'  
I gave my youth: but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? had fate  
Proposed bliss here should sublimate  
My being—had I sign'd the bond—  
Still one must lead some life beyond,  
Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.  
This foot once planted on the goal,  
This glory-garland round my soul,  
Could I descry such? Try and test!  
I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?  
Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!  
What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
At life's best, with our eyes upturn'd  
Whither life's flower is first discern'd,  
We, fix'd so, ever should so abide?  
What if we still ride on, we two  
With life forever old yet new,  
Changed not in kind but in degree,  
The instant made eternity,—  
And heaven just prove that I and she  
Ride, ride together, for ever ride?

## HOME-THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

O to be in England  
Now that April's there,  
And whoever wakes in England  
Sees, some morning, unaware,  
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough  
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,  
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!  
Hark, where my blossom'd pear-tree in the hedge  
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover  
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—  
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,  
Lest you should think he never could recapture  
The first fine careless rapture!  
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,  
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew  
The buttercups, the little children's dower  
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

## HOME-THOUGHTS FROM THE SEA

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-west died  
away;  
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz  
Bay;  
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;  
In the dimmest North-east distance dawn'd Gibraltar  
grand and gray;  
“Here and here did England help me: how can I help  
England?”—say,  
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and  
pray,  
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.



## THE LOST LEADER

Just for a handful of silver he left us,  
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—  
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,  
Lost all the others, she lets us devote;  
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,  
So much was theirs who so little allowed:  
How all our copper had gone for his service!  
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!  
We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,  
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,  
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,  
Made him our pattern to live and to die!  
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,  
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their  
    graves!

He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,  
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;  
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;  
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,  
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire.  
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,  
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,  
One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,  
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!  
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!  
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,  
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,  
Never glad confident morning again!  
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,  
Menace our heart ere we master his own;  
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,  
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

RABBI BEN EZRA

Grow old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was made:  
Our times are in His hand  
Who saith, "A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,  
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,  
Which lily leave and then as best recall!"  
Not that, admiring stars,  
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;  
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends  
them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears  
Annulling youth's brief years,  
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!  
Rather I prize the doubt  
Low kinds exist without,  
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,  
Were man but formed to feed  
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:  
Such feasting ended, then  
As sure an end to men;  
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-  
crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied  
To That which doth provide  
And not partake, effect and not receive!  
A spark disturbs our clod;  
Nearer we hold of God  
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!  
Be our joys three-parts pain!  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;  
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the  
throe!

For thence,—a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:  
What I aspired to be,  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale

What is he but a brute  
Whose flesh hath soul to suit,  
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?  
To man, propose this test—  
Thy body at its best,  
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:  
I own the Past profuse  
Of power each side, perfection every turn:  
Eyes, ears took in their dole,  
Brain treasured up the whole;  
Should not the heart beat once, "How good to live and  
learn?"

Not once beat, "Praise be Thine!  
I see the whole design,  
I, who saw power, see now love perfect too:  
Perfect I call Thy plan:  
Thanks that I was a man!  
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what Thou shalt do!"

For pleasant is this flesh;  
Our soul, in its rose-mesh  
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:  
Would we some prize might hold  
To match those manifold  
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best!

Let us not always say,  
“Spite of this flesh today  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!”  
As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, “All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps  
soul!”

Therefore I summon age  
To grant youth’s heritage,  
Life’s struggle having so far reached its term:  
Thence shall I pass, approved  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute; a god though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon  
Take rest, ere I be gone  
Once more on my adventure brave and new:  
Fearless and unperplexed,  
When I wage battle next,  
What weapons to select, what armour to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try  
My gain or loss thereby;  
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:  
And I shall weigh the same,  
Give life its praise or blame:  
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

For, note when evening shuts,  
A certain moment cuts  
The deed off, calls the glory from the grey:  
A whisper from the west  
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,  
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

So, still within this life,  
Though lifted o'er its strife,  
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,  
"This rage was right i' the main,  
That acquiescence vain:  
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved  
To man, with soul just nerved  
To act tomorrow what he learns today:  
Here, work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tools true play.

As it was better, youth  
Should strive, through acts uncouth,  
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:  
So, better, age, exempt  
From strife, should know, than tempt  
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right  
And Good and Infinite  
Be named here, as thou call'st thy hand thine own,  
With knowledge absolute,  
Subject to no dispute  
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.



Be there, for once and all,  
Severed great minds from small,  
Announced to each his station in the Past!  
Was I, the world arraigned,  
Were they, my soul disdained,  
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at  
last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?  
Ten men love what I hate,  
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;  
Ten, who in ears and eyes  
Match me: we all surmise,  
They, this thing, and I, that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass  
Called "work," must sentence pass,  
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;  
O'er which, from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb  
And finger failed to plumb,  
So passed in making up the main account:  
All instincts immature,  
All purposes unsure,  
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's  
amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act,  
Fancies that broke through language and escaped:  
All I could never be,  
All, men ignored in me,  
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,  
That metaphor! and feel  
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—  
Thou, to whom fools propound,  
When the wine makes its round,  
“Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize  
today!”

Fool! All that is, at all,  
Lasts ever, past recall;  
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:  
What entered into thee,  
*That* was, is, and shall be:  
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
Of plastic circumstance,  
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:  
Machinery just meant  
To give thy soul its bent,  
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves  
Which ran the laughing loves  
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?  
What though, about thy rim,  
Scull-things in order grim  
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!  
To uses of a cup,  
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,  
The new wine's foaming flow,  
The Master's lips a-glow!  
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with  
earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,  
Thee, God, who moulded men!  
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,  
Did I,—to the wheel of life  
With shapes and colours rife,  
Bound dizzily,—mistake my end, to slake Thy thirst:

So, take and use Thy work,  
Amend what flaws may lurk,  
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!  
My times be in Thy hand!  
Perfect the cup as planned!  
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

### PROSPICE

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
The mist in my face,  
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
I am nearing the place,  
The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
The post of the foe;  
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
Yet the strong man must go:  
For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
And the barriers fall,  
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
The reward of it all.  
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
The best and the last!  
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,  
And bade me creep past.  
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain.  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest!

#### EPILOGUE TO ASOLANDO

At the midnight in the silence of the sleeptime,  
When you set your fancies free,  
Will they pass to where by death you \* think im-  
prisoned—  
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,  
Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!  
What had I on earth to do  
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?  
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel—  
Being who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast for-  
ward,  
Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed though right were worsted wrong would  
triumph,  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time  
Greet the unseen with a cheer!  
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,  
"Strive and thrive!" cry, "God to speed, fare ever \*  
There as here!"

\* According to the first draft made by Browning.

## JULIA WARD HOWE

(1819-1910)

Julia Ward, daughter of Samuel Ward, was born in New York City in 1819, the same year as Queen Victoria. In 1843 she married Dr. Howe, who was in his time an eminent philanthropist. With her husband she conducted, previous to the Civil War, *The Boston Commonwealth*, an anti-slavery paper. Her ardour for the cause of freedom breathes through the burning words that she wrote as a marching hymn for the Northern Army. The composer Work's words and music, *Marching Through Georgia*, may have suggested the form of the poem, which, however, is pitched in a much nobler key.

After the war Mrs. Howe became an ardent worker in the cause of woman suffrage and prison reform. She wrote a *Life of Margaret Fuller* and *Sketches of Representative Women of New England*. Her verse is known through a volume entitled *Passion Flowers*. In 1910 her death brought to a close a busy and useful life at the advanced age of ninety-one.

### BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of  
wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift  
sword:

His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling  
camps;  
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and  
damps;  
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring  
lamps.

His day is marching on.



I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:  
"As you deal with My contemnners, so with you my grace  
shall deal;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his  
heel,  
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call  
retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-  
seat:  
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my  
feet!  
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:  
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
While God is marching on.

## CHARLES KINGSLEY

(1819–1875)

There is something breezy and refreshing about Kingsley, and he is like his native Devonshire always dreaming of the sea. He is closely associated with Clovelly.

Kingsley was sent to King's College, London, and later proceeded to Cambridge. In 1842 he returned to his beloved Eversley, of which he had been appointed Rector. Nine years later he published *Yeast*, a bold plea for social reform; in 1853 *Hypatia*, a somewhat conventional presentation of an early Christian martyr; and in 1855 his most enduring work, *Westward Ho*. His poetry is found in two volumes, *The Saint's Tragedy* and *Andromeda and Other Poems*, but is not so popular as his prose. Kingsley also attempted the essay and the drama with moderate success.

In 1860 he was made a Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, where he remained for nine years. He died in 1875 at the age of fifty-six. The two pieces, *The Sands of Dee* and *The Three Fishers*, rise to the high water mark of Kingsley's poetry and are the sole survivors of many forgotten verses.

### THE THREE FISHERS

Three fishers went sailing out into the West,  
Out into the West as the sun went down;  
Each thought on the woman who lov'd him the best;  
And the children stood watching them out of the town;  
For men must work, and women must weep,  
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,  
    Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the light-house tower,  
And they trimm'd the lamps as the sun went down;  
They look'd at the squall, and they look'd at the shower,  
And the night rack came rolling up ragged and brown!  
But men must work, and women must weep,  
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,  
    And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands  
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,  
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands  
For those who will never come back to the town;  
For men must work, and women must weep,  
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep—  
And good-by to the bar and its moaning.

#### THE SANDS OF DEE

“O Mary, go and call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
Across the sands of Dee!”  
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,  
And all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand,  
And o'er and o'er the sand,  
And round and round the sand,  
As far as eye could see;  
The blinding mist came down and hid the land:  
And never home came she.

“O, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair,—  
A tress of golden hair,  
Of drownéd maiden's hair,  
Above the nets at sea?  
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,  
Among the stakes on Dee.”

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,—  
The cruel, crawling foam,  
The cruel, hungry foam,—  
To her grave beside the sea;  
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,  
Across the sands of Dee.

## WALT WHITMAN

(1819-1892)

Whitman was born at Westhills, Long Island, New York, in 1819 and died at Camden, New Jersey, in 1892. He at first taught school and later became a printer, editor, and miscellaneous writer. In 1855 he published *Leaves of Grass*, which contains some noble sentiment intermingled with crude egotism and not a little indecency. The author spurns the laws of verse and writes in a kind of rhythmic prose of his own invention. W. M. Rosetti, who edited the English edition of *Leaves of Grass* in 1868, did Whitman a great service in eliminating the objectionable elements from his work.

Some of Whitman's best verse is contained in *Drum-Taps*, which includes memories of the Civil War and of Lincoln's assassination. Poetry is so essentially wedded to measured music, that the Whitman experiment in free verse is never likely to find favour with those who love "the poet's magic word," with its harmonious numbers and its power of assuaging the perturbations of the human spirit.

### O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought  
is won;

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and  
daring.

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle  
trills—  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the  
shores a-crowding—  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces  
turning.

Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head!  
It is some dream that on the deck  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will.  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed  
and done;  
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object  
won.

Exult, O shores! and ring, O bells!  
But I with mournful tread  
Walk the deck—my Captain lies  
Fallen cold and dead.



## ADAM LINDSAY GORDON

(1833–1870)

The brightest gem of the poetic sky of Australia is Adam Lindsay Gordon, who died at the age of thirty-six, and died by his own hand. He was born at the Azores, where his father, an officer in the British Army, was stationed. After an English education, he went to South Australia in 1853. There he became at first a trooper in the mounted police and later a member of Parliament.

His earliest volume, *Sea Spray and Smoke Drift*, was published in Melbourne in 1868. Of his second book, which contains his best work, he finished revising the proofs the day before he died. Gordon's poetry is often commonplace, being concerned with horses and horseracing,—material from which great poetry can scarcely be made.

Gordon was influenced by Byron and Swinburne, especially the latter, whose hopeless interpretation of life is reflected in his poetry and in his tragic end.

A little season of light and laughter,  
Of love and leisure, and pleasure and pain,  
And a horror of outer darkness after,  
And dust returneth to dust again.

Gordon's last poem, entitled *Valedictory*, reaches a height unattained by the rest of his verse, and is certain of immortality. It has the lyric beauty of Byron's best work and a rushing quality of verse that suggests the restlessness of the New World. It is original both in thought and expression, deeply pathetic and marvellously musical.

## VALEDICTORY

Lay me low, my work is done,  
I am weary. Lay me low,  
Where the wild flowers woo the sun,  
Where the balmy breezes blow,  
Where the butterfly takes wing,  
Where the aspens, drooping, grow,  
Where the young birds chirp and sing,—  
I am weary, let me go.

I have striven hard and long  
In the world's unequal fight,  
Always to resist the wrong,  
Always to maintain the right;  
Always with a stubborn heart  
Taking, giving blow for blow;  
Brother, I have played my part,  
And am weary, let me go.

Stern the world and bitter cold,  
Irksome, painful to endure;  
Everywhere a love of gold,  
Nowhere pity for the poor;  
Everywhere mistrust, disguise,  
Pride, hypocrisy and show:  
Draw the curtain, close mine eyes,  
I am weary, let me go.

Other chance when I am gone  
May restore the battle call,  
Bravely lead the good cause on  
Fighting in the which I fall.  
God may quicken some true soul  
Here to take my place below  
In the heroes' muster-roll,—  
I am weary, let me go.

Shield and buckler, hang them up,  
Drape the standards on the wall;  
I have drained the mortal cup  
To the finish, dregs and all!  
When our work is done, 'tis best,  
Brother, best that we should go,—  
I am weary, let me rest;  
    I am weary, lay me low.

## WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

(1849-1903)

William Ernest Henley was born at Gloucester in 1849. During his fifty-four years of this life, he was destined to become prominent in four branches of literature. He is recognized as a poet, playwright, editor, and critic.

Henley's first poetic effort, *Hospital Rhymes*, was published soon after a long sojourn in the hospital in 1873-75. This was shortly afterward followed by *A Book of Verses*, and later *For England's Sake*, *Hawthorn and Lavender*, and other patriotic poems.

Henley edited *The Magazine of Art*, the *Scots Observer*, and the *New Review*, besides bringing out an edition of Burns. He collaborated with Robert Louis Stevenson in a number of plays. They were at one time very dear friends; but later they drifted apart, ostensibly after a trivial quarrel over some royalties.

Henley's work was for the most part ephemeral, and two poems, *England, My England* and *Invictus*, are all that today save him from oblivion. He died in 1903.

The sun,  
Closing his benediction,  
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—  
Night with her train of stars  
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!

\* \* \* \* \*

Let me be gather'd to the quiet west,  
The sundown splendid and serene,  
Death.

## INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.



## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

(1850–1894)

Robert Louis Stevenson is better known to us as a novelist and teller of stories than a writer of poems. He was born in Edinburgh in 1850. He studied for the law, but after being admitted to the bar in 1875, ill-health forced him to seek a more temperate climate. Much of his time was spent in travel, till he finally settled in Samoa. There he spent the remaining years of his life, not only writing, but also acting as an arbitrator among the natives, who, because they loved him, accepted his decisions. When he died in 1894, the Samoans sorrowfully made for him a grave overlooking the vast expanse of his beloved Pacific, and on the head-stone was chiseled his own epitaph:

*Here he lies where he longed to be;  
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,  
And the hunter home from the hill.*

Stevenson is known and admired for his novels with their lucid style and vivid interpretation of human nature. The most widely read are *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. His one slim volume of poetry, *A Child's Garden of Verse*, especially endears him to children.

### THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high  
And blow the birds about the sky;  
And all around I heard you pass,  
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,  
But always you yourself you hid.  
I felt you push, I heard you call,  
I could not see yourself at all—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,  
O blower, are you young or old?  
Are you a beast of field and tree,  
Or just a stronger child than me?  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

### MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,  
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.  
He is very very like me from the heels up to the head,  
And I see him jump before me when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—  
Not at all like proper children which is always very slow,  
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india rubber  
ball,  
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him  
at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,  
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.  
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;  
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks  
to me.

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,  
I rose and found the shining dew on every butter-cup;  
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,  
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in  
bed.

#### REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky  
Dig the grave and let me lie:  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:  
*Here he lies where he longed to be;*  
*Home is the sailor, home from the sea,*  
*And the hunter home from the hill.*

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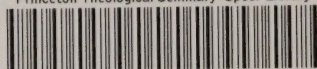






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